

A MANLY BOY

A SERIES OF TALKS AND TALES FOR BOYS

BY

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TO
MY OWN
Manly Sons,
GILBERT HAVEN,
WILLARD AINSWORTH,
SHERLOCK LEE, AND
RENE PARKMAN,
This Little Volume
IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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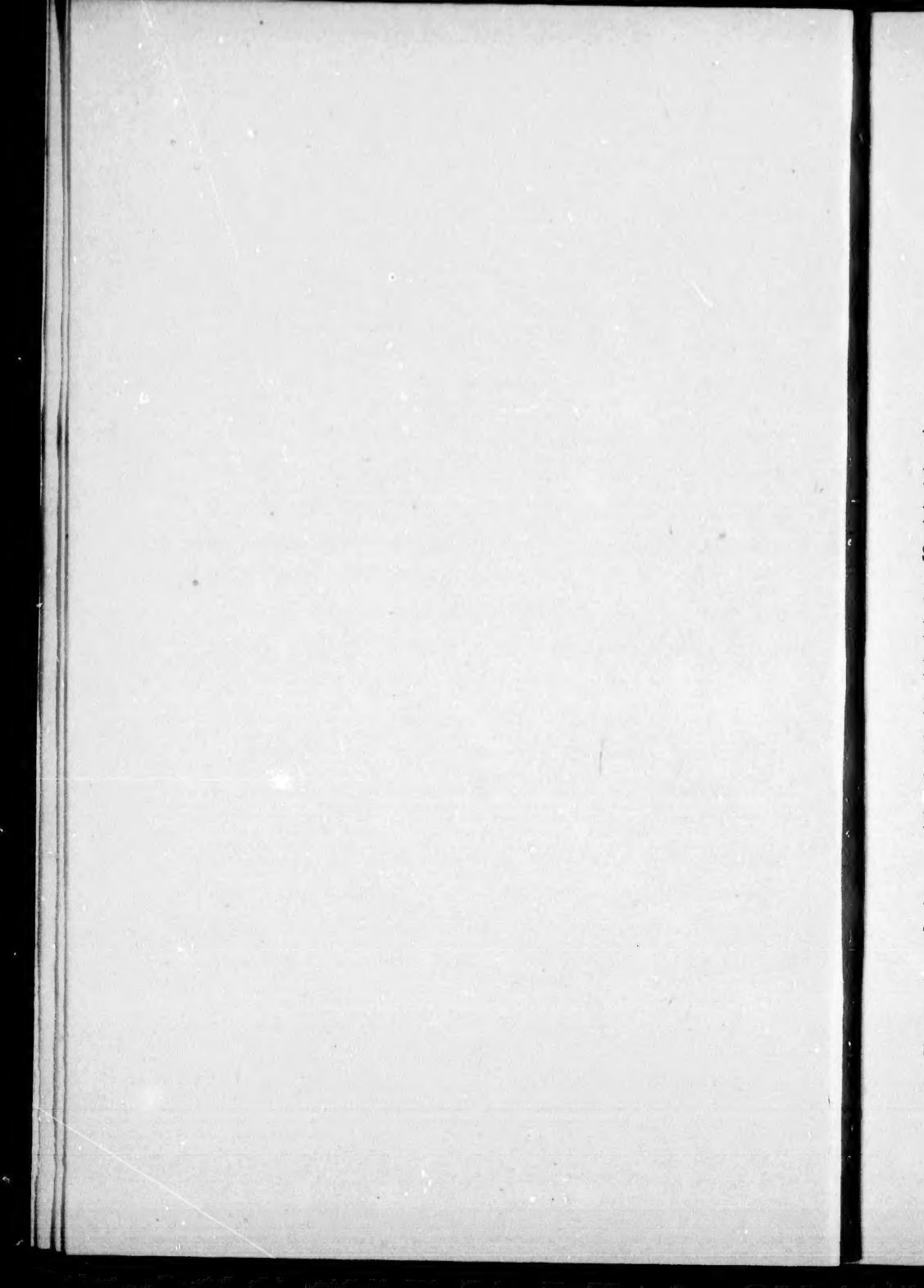
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PREFACE.

THE chapters which make up this little volume were all originally delivered in a series of Saturday morning talks to a large audience of boys among the Juniors of the Young Men's Christian Association of Cleveland, Ohio. They were prepared with that bright-faced, sparkling-eyed audience of live boys of from twelve to sixteen years of age in mind. Those manly young fellows seemed to get good out of them, and I have hoped by sending them out to a larger audience to have the opportunity of here and there, in farm-house and village, arousing other boys to a new determination to make the very best of this wonderful life on which they are entering. Next to a sweet, womanly girl, the best thing God has made is a wholesome, manly boy. To every boy to whom this volume may come I send my love and my "Godspeed" to a happy and a noble career.

LOUIS ALBERT BANKS.

CLEVELAND, OHIO,
March 24th, 1900.



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A MANLY BOY.

VIM.

VIM is a certain sort of spirit and energy with which people sometimes do a thing so that it seems like something else—it so changes and improves whatever is done. When a boy has vim it is like the gas in soda water, that makes it sparkle and dance in the glass. If you take all that out of the soda water, it tastes flat and dead, and nobody will want to drink it. So a boy without vim is tasteless.

Vim is like spirit in a horse. Some horses are always up and a-coming—they hold the head high, arch the neck, hold the tail proudly, and when they step in movement it seems as if their feet were made of India rubber, they bounce so. They never need a touch of the whip, or a word of scolding, to make them go. All they want is the open road, and a firm hand on the reins to let them know which way to take. It makes the blood tingle in a man's veins to drive a horse like that. It is the vim in the horse that makes him do that. Sometimes you see a horse without vim, and he drags one foot along after the other as though he was afraid his hind legs would

catch up with his fore legs—and sometimes they do, and he goes stumbling for lack of vim. The driver may whip him, or yell at him, all he pleases, and it does no good, for the horse has no spirit, or, rather, no vim.

Now, a boy without vim is like the horse that is whipped and pounded and worried to no purpose. But a boy with vim is like the thoroughbred.

The whole world is looking after boys with vim in them. School teachers are always pleased when they find a boy like that, because the boy with vim isn't trying to find out how little he can know about the lesson and yet manage to scrape through on examination day. It doesn't please a boy with vim to get through with his class by the skin of his teeth. He wants to know all there is to be known about the lesson he is studying. If he is working examples in arithmetic or algebra, he isn't satisfied simply to get the answer right. He wants to know how he did it and why he did it—in short, he not only gets his lessons well, but he knows all about them, and he is happy while he is getting them, and takes great pleasure and pride in thoroughly mastering everything connected with them. There is a great difference between knowing your lesson that way and dragging along through. As much difference as there is between soda water that blows the cork out and soda water with the gas gone.

The merchants are all hunting for boys with vim. A boy without vim is always studying to find out how little he can do in a store and still get his pay.

He comes as late as he dares, and if he is sent out on an errand, he stays away from work as long as possible, and is always trying to make his work easy for himself, without caring whether he is helping his employer or not. He goes dragging about from one place to another, indifferent as to whether he looks well and does his work neatly and promptly or not. The merchant is always sure to get rid of that boy the very first chance he has. But the boy with vim goes at it in an entirely different way. He is up early in the morning, first one at breakfast, and the first one at the store. He is not only ready to do what he is told, but he tries to think of things that he can do to help along his employer's interest. He isn't afraid to *run* on an errand if there is a call for something to be done quickly. He goes at his work as if he were going to a ball game. He is determined to succeed, and the spirit of that determination in him bubbles over in neatness and promptness and politeness and in faithful service.

In the late war between the United States and Spain the chief quality which attracted the world's attention to such men as Lieutenant Hobson and Colonel Roosevelt was this quality of vim. There were a plenty of lieutenants and colonels who were ready to obey orders and do whatever they were told to do faithfully, but these men had so much energy and spirit—so much vim—that they were always inventing ways by which they could help along the cause. There is always room for boys and men who are full of the sparkle, the spirit—the

vim—of helpfulness in any necessary department of human life.

Vim can be cultivated just the same as any other quality. By care we can get into the habit of doing things promptly and keeping our eyes open to observe opportunities. A little watchdog awake, though he be only a pug or a terrier, is worth more than a St. Bernard if he is asleep ; so a boy who is wide-awake—always ready to do his best and do it at once—has a great deal better prospect of success, though he only have moderate ability, than a genius who is sluggish or careless. All other things being equal, the boy sparkling with vim will wear the laurels in the race of life.

Vim is as necessary in religion as anywhere else ; and the Bible says about some folks who had lost the vim out of their religion, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot [that is, tasteless], I will spue thee out of my mouth."

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PUSH.

SOME boys seem to have vim enough and are always doing something ; they are not lazy nor sleepy, and yet they never get anything done of any importance.

They seem all the time to be going, but never get anywhere. The trouble is that they do not make any steady push in any one direction. They lack purpose. They are like a log of drift-wood out on the lake. Some big storm, which lashes the waves to fury on Lake Erie, cuts under an overhanging bluff on the American shore, and a big oak tree loses its balance and falls prone into the water. The tree has nobody to guide it and no way to help itself, and so it floats on the water and drifts whichever way the wind blows ; it may drift around for months before it is finally beached. One day it drifts north, another day it drifts south ; a strong wind in that direction may carry it almost over to Canada ; then the wind will shift about and drive it back again toward the Ohio shore. After a while, when it is pretty well waterlogged, it is tossed up on the sands and lies there to rot.

Now, you know there are some boys who have the experience of that tree ; all because they start

out in life without any good, honest purpose to push them steadily in a worthy direction. If that oak tree had been built into a skiff, and had had a boy inside it with a pair of oars, it could have been rowed steadily toward a safe landing place and made of use to the world. Or it might have been built into a sail-boat, and with a good, strong sail to fill with the wind and push it on its course, and a bright boy at the tiller to guide it in its way through the water, it might have been a thing of beauty and profit. Or, better yet, it might have gone into the building of a great steamer, with a big furnace down in the heart of it, where the stokers would pile in the coal to make steam to push it through the water, carrying the great cargo of iron ore or hundreds of passengers, while it obeyed perfectly the will of the pilot.

Now, it would have been a piece of oak wood in any case ; but to be propelled by oars, or driven by sails or steam, and guided by a wise hand, meant to be a thing of value and beauty, while to drift was to be ugly and useless.

A certain kind of people sometimes come to the back door with ragged clothes and dirty faces, begging for something to eat or a pair of old shoes ; we call them tramps. They are human driftlogs that were once bright, intelligent boys, and a great many of them have come to their present condition for lack of push. I remember one tramp with whom I was acquainted when he was a boy. He was a very bright boy, too, and could learn his lessons easily, and nobody could have told when he was fourteen years

old that at twenty-five he would be a poor driftlog, begging at people's back doors for a piece of bread or a chance to sleep in the barn. This boy lacked push. He did not seem to care what happened so long as he had a pleasant time—that is, so long as he had plenty to eat and wear and some jolly fellows to idle with. He could get his lesson easily, but he never formed the purpose to get a good education, and did not push on to graduate in the high school. He got employment, but he did not purpose to be a first-class man in his work, and so, not pushing his work, his work soon pushed him out of a job, and he drifted along until nobody would hire him, and he became a poor tramp.

A boy should always have something on hand that is worth doing, and when he has set out to do it, do it at the time he has determined on. Steadily push whatever you have in hand until it is done, and then select something else to do. A boy is in a dangerous position when he is lounging around "doing nothing."

Edward Everett Hale tells the story that once, when he was a boy in Boston, a young fellow about his age asked him to go with him to the wharf on Charles River. Young Hale said, "What to do?" The answer was, "Oh, nothing." But Hale was horrified at the idea of going off to spend a whole afternoon without anything to do, and the result of that spirit can be seen in his noble life. In writing books, in organizing societies for the help of humanity, and in doing good in a hundred ways, his life

has seemed like a miracle to some people, simply because he has always had on hand something worth doing, and pushed it steadily till he got it done.

It is not enough just to be harmless. A boy may be counted good and yet be good for nothing. Select for yourself something that is worth doing—something that, if it is done, you will be proud of—and then push. Wherever an honest, straightforward boy pushes things toward a definite purpose that is good enough to come true, all the difficulties will soon show the white flag.

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PLUCK.

NO quality is more admirable in a man or a boy than what we commonly call pluck. A plucky person does not easily give up the thing which seems desirable for him to do. He may have to go without a good many things he would like to have, be compelled to work hard, or run the risk of many unpleasant experiences in order to accomplish his purpose; but when he makes up his mind that a thing ought to be done, he goes straight ahead and does it, no matter what happens.

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, who is himself a splendid illustration of a plucky man, when making his farewell address to the "Rough Riders" gave them an illustration of the lack of pluck. He said there had come to him that morning in camp a man who was whimpering and complaining because, he said, "I haven't had any milk for a whole day." Colonel Roosevelt said, "I looked straight at him and replied, 'You poor thing, you.'" The grumbling soldier slunk away with a shamed, downcast face.

If one has real pluck, he does not put off till the very last possible moment the disagreeable things that ought to be done, but goes straight at them at once, and many a threatening difficulty loses its bold front when attacked face to face by a plucky soul.

One of the pluckiest boys I ever knew was a young fellow in Boston, who had been crippled by some disease when he was a very little boy, so that he could not walk at all. His legs and feet were shrunk and shriveled like withered bean pods, and were drawn up under him so that he could not stand on them. The only way he could get about at all was on two heavy crutches placed under his arms. When I first knew him he was about fourteen or fifteen years old. His father was a carpenter, and as there was a large family of children, he was very anxious to find out some way by which he could make a living for himself and be a man among men. It seemed a pretty hard chance, for when a boy cannot walk or get about to help himself he has to carry a heavy weight in the race of life. But this young fellow had a good, honest head and a plucky, brave heart, and told me he was determined to earn his living like other men, despite the fact that he was a cripple. He finally decided that he could learn engraving, as that was a kind of work which he could do without walking around. He got a chance to work in an engraver's office, and worked there two or three years before he got any pay at all. He stuck to it, long hours, six days in the week, and was always on hand promptly, always cheerful and good-humored, and the last one to go away. After a while he became a very fair engraver, and was able to get money enough to pay his own expenses. But this did not satisfy him, for he was determined to be the best engraver in the country, and so he worked on, never allowing any-

thing to go out of his hands until he had made the very best job of it that it was possible for him to do. The result was that after about four years a big business concern in a Southern city, which wanted a fine engraver, was recommended to try him, and for the last six or eight years he has been earning a very large salary—three or four times as much as his father can earn carpentering—and is able not only to take care of himself splendidly and lay up money, but to be a great blessing and comfort to his family. Now, that was a case of genuine pluck. How easy it would have been for him to have said, "You cannot expect a boy without any legs to earn his own living!" and he would have lived unhappily, been a burden to his friends, and probably spent his old age in the poorhouse. But pluck won the day and made a splendid man of him.

Boys often need good, honest pluck to stand up for their faith in Christ and let people know that they are trying to be genuine Christian boys. It often takes a lot of pluck to do that. One of the officers in the United States navy says that he never doubted Rear Admiral Sampson's bravery since the first night he saw him, many years ago, when Sampson was a young ensign, and came on board the same ship with the officer who tells the story. When young Sampson came to go to bed the doors of the cabins opened together in the officers' quarters, so that there was not much chance for privacy. But notwithstanding there were a number of officers laughing and talking in plain sight, Sampson kneeled down beside his

berth and said his prayers as quietly as though he had been in his bedroom in his mother's home. The officers all respected him for it, and the one who relates it says that, though he had not had the pluck to do so before, thereafter he kneeled beside his bed to say his own prayers every night. No doubt it took much more pluck in those young men to do that than it would have taken to face a storm of shells in the heat of battle. Every one of our lives calls for plucky, courageous conduct, and such deeds, though they may never get into the papers, are none the less splendid and heroic.

STICK-TO-IT-IVENESS.

DID you ever see a hawk after a squirrel—a big gray squirrel, with a long brush that he can throw up over his back as far front as his head? If you ever do, you will see a very funny and interesting sight. The squirrel knows very well that the hawk is sure to get the better of him whenever it has a fair chance to pounce on his back; but the squirrel is a great dodger, and so long as he will stick to his tree he can outdodge the hawk every time and save his scalp. The hawk goes at it very carefully. When he spies a gray squirrel in a tree he first lights on the top of the tree, and then hops down a limb at a time, driving the squirrel down the tree ahead of him. If he can scare the squirrel enough to make him lose his head and jump to the ground, he can nab him in a minute; or if he can make him jump to another tree, he stands a pretty good chance to catch him on the way. But if the squirrel has good sense he will do neither. Instead he sticks to his tree, dodges every pounce of the hawk, and chatters and barks away as though he were poking fun at the bird and saying to him, "Come now, wouldn't you like a good mess of squirrel?" The hawk strikes at him with his wings, and grabs at him with his sharp claws,

but he gets nothing but bark for his pains so long as the squirrel sticks to his tree.

So there's many a hawk after a boy, trying hard to tempt him to jump from the work he has in hand; and if he gets in the habit of jumping from what he is set to do, he will soon be a goner, sure. It is the boy who sticks to what he sets out to do until it is done who makes a success of life.

A merchant came into the back room of his shop one day and said to the boy whose business it was to keep things clean, "You haven't made things look very neat and orderly here in the back room."

"Well, I thought it was good enough for back here; there don't many customers come out here to see things."

"That won't do! You must get ideas of that kind out of your head, my boy, if you hope to succeed in life. That kind of 'good enough' is not much better than 'bad enough.'"

The boy had not stuck to it until he got things in shape. It's a good thing for a boy to get a reputation of always sticking to the thing he starts out to do until he gets it done.

A mother was ready to go to the railroad depot for a journey. She had her bonnet and shawl on, and had gone two or three times to the window to look out, when she said to her husband, who was bundled up in the corner with rheumatism, "I'm almost afraid John won't be on hand in time to take me to the station. It is getting near to train time."

"Oh, yes, he will, if nothing special keeps him. He

promised to come, and he is a sure-enough boy, John is," replied the man. And just then the boy drove up in the wagon.

That expression, "He's a sure-enough boy," has stuck in my memory. It's a great reputation for a boy to have, and no boy will ever have it unless he is a sticker.

When Kipling was a boy he went on a voyage on a sailing vessel with his father. The father was suddenly awakened one day by a sailor, who said to him in great alarm, "Your son has climbed out on the yardarm and is hanging on by his hands. If he should let go he would be drowned." The elder Kipling knew what kind of a boy Rudyard was, and said quietly, "But he won't let go." And the father turned over and went to sleep again.

This gift of stick-to-it-iveness often turns a failure into a success.

Last year a man over in Seattle concluded to take a lot of eggs into the Klondike with him. He bought one thousand seven hundred and forty-three dozen eggs. He broke and packed them into tin cans, each can holding six dozen ; then he froze them and started for the gold fields. He put four cans in a sack and tied the sack over a dog's back, so as to make each dog carry twenty-eight pounds, until he got over the mountains, and then he piled the cans on sleds and made the dogs pull them. It was at Thirty-Mile River that the sticking qualities of the man came out. He built a raft to float himself and his eggs down the river. The raft ran against a rock and upset his

precious cargo into the stream, but the sacks of eggs went floating down the river among the broken pieces of ice. It was bitter cold, but the egg man did not ponder long what to do. He plunged into the stream and pulled out the sacks one at a time. To get them all out he had to run along and get into the stream for a mile and a half. His clothes froze to him, but he saved his eggs. He took them sixty-five miles farther and sold them out at \$3 a dozen, and brought back over \$5,000 for his trip. Now, that man had stick-to-it-iveness. The Bible says that even the Lord cannot do anything for anybody who is unstable like water and cannot be depended on. All the crowns that are promised in the Bible are for those who persevere unto the end.

FUSS.

WHEN I was a boy on the farm it used to be a part of my work to keep track of the hens' nests and gather up the eggs carefully every day. There were a large orchard and a number of little thickets of small timber and underbrush near by, and these, with two or three old barns with large hay-mows, made fine places for the hens to hide their nests. Now, if there is one thing that a hen loves above another, it is to hide her nest away where nobody can find it, until she has her young chickens hatched out, and brings them home, the proudest old mother you ever saw. One way I had of finding out where the hens had made their nests was to take advantage of the funny habit that a hen has of cackling to announce to everybody that she has laid an egg. But I used to be greatly disgusted with some old hens that would go out to the barn or the thicket and act as though they were hunting up a nesting place, and pretty soon would have a great cackling spell, but no egg ever came of it. They made more fuss about it than the hens that did lay eggs.

Now, a fussy boy is a great deal like that sort of a hen. He goes bustling around and cackles a great deal, but he doesn't produce any eggs. He can strut and cackle and crow, but gets very little work done.

There is an old proverb which says that "Still water runs deep," and there is a good deal in it. A boy who has got real pluck in him, and means to do things, is likely to go straight along and do them without much fuss. There is another proverb which says, "A barking dog never bites," and that is likely to be correct. The real watchdog jumps for the burglar, and sets his teeth in the first thing. So a boy that has an appetite for work is likely to be so busy with his teeth in the work that he doesn't have time to use his jaws fussing about it. Look out for something to happen when a quiet boy takes up his job and goes off and goes at it without doing much talking about it.

The most brilliant hero of the Spanish-American war was Lieutenant Hobson, but he is not the only Hobson who has won fame on the sea. An English army officer tells the story of a young boy named Hobson, who was on an English ship during an engagement with the French fleet, at a time when there was war between France and England. He was only a little fellow, and had just run away from a drunken father, who beat him, to enlist, and didn't know much about the navy. While the fight was going on the boy went up to an old sailor and asked, "What are we trying to do?"

"Do you see that flag up there?" said the sailor, pointing to the masthead of the French ship.

"Yes," said the boy.

"Well, we want to get that flag down," said the old tar.

The boy said nothing, but soon after the English crew raised a mighty shout of cheers, and the French saw that their flag was gone. Instantly the English commander gave the order to board the enemy, and in a few minutes the French ship surrendered.

The commodore inquired: "Who saw the French colors shot away?"

Nobody could answer till a little figure was seen sliding down the shrouds with something wrapped around his arm. It was young Hobson. Without being seen he had crossed the yards from his own to the enemy's masthead, and in the heat of action had cut the Frenchman's flag from its halyards and taken possession of it.

The boy was promoted to the quarter-deck, and, by continued bravery, he rose step by step, until he became Admiral Hobson.

So, I say, look out for the boys who don't cackle much, or make much fuss, bragging about what they are going to do, but who go straight at it to do things.

There is another kind of fuss which some people are always making over any little hurt or trouble that they have. Some boys, if they fall down and skin their shins, just grit their teeth and go along and say nothing, and soon forget all about it. Other boys, if they meet with the slightest little accident, will fuss, and fume, and fret, until you would think they were half dead. I have heard that there is a land called "Phussandphret." Some poet writes

about it, and tells about the kind of boys and girls that are there ; he says :

“And the children—it really makes me sad
To think they never look happy and glad.
It is ‘Oh, dear me!’ until school is done,
And ’tis then, ‘There never is time for fun!’
Their teachers are cross, they all declare,
And examinations are never fair.
Each little duty they are apt to shirk,
Because they’re tired, or ’tis too hard work.
Every one is as grave as an owl ;
And has pouting lips or a gloomy scowl ;
The voices whine and the eyes are wet,
In this doleful country of Phussandphret.”

By all means, boys, emigrate from that land by
the very first ship.

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FIDGET.

A BOY with the fidgets is like the proverbial Irishman's flea—"when you put your finger on him he isn't there." The wise writer of Proverbs says that the most splendid thing that anybody can do in this world is to master himself. And that is just what a fidgety fellow doesn't do. You have seen, probably, some child with the Saint Vitus' dance, or some older person with the shaking palsy, unable to control his own motions. It is a pitiful sight. But a fidgety boy is allowing himself to become that way when it is not necessary. To be fidgety is to be restless and nervous and uncertain in one's movements, so that one does not do the sensible, natural thing that is expected.

Now, there are several things that cause a boy to get the fidgets. One is an idle mind. A young mind is naturally active; it is meant to be so, and it must think about something; and unless it is thinking about something good and useful, it will think about something else. If the farmer does not sow any grain in his field it will come up in weeds, and the weeds will not be in rows or in order, but they will be in fidgety little clumps scattered here and there. Now, if a boy has no regular work to think of and to occupy his attention, the weeds of fidgetiness are sure

by

to come up in clumps, and he will do all sorts of unexpected, silly things.

Another cause of the fidgets is the feeling in a boy's heart that he has done wrong. People are always likely to be fidgety when their conscience troubles them. If a boy knows he is doing right, then he can look everybody in the face bravely and go straight along about his work in a natural way ; but if he has done wrong, and is trying to forget about it or trying to cover it up so nobody will find it out, you may be sure he will have the fidgets.

Sometimes boys have the fidgets because they are not careful to find out the exact truth about things. If the lesson is very hard, instead of digging into it until they know all about it, or going to the teacher and confessing their ignorance and asking to have it thoroughly explained, they try to hide their ignorance, and then on examination day they have the fidgets sure enough.

Some boys are always jumping at conclusions. If there is anything to face in the way of work or study, instead of carefully finding out what is to be done they go at it in a guessing, haphazard fashion that is likely to land them in the fidgets before they are through. Abraham Lincoln used to tell of an old backwoodsman who had very heavy, overhanging eyebrows, and wore big spectacles with brass rims. One day he came rushing into his cabin, and seizing a rifle fired it carefully through a crack of a door at a grizzly bear that stood near, and fired.

"What is it?" whispered his wife.

"A wildcat, Sairy; the orneriest wildcat you ever see, an' I missed him!"

He hastily loaded and fired again, and then again.

"Now hold on, Joshua," said his good wife. "Let me look at you. Why, lawks-a-daisy, it's nothin' but a little bug on one of your eyebrows!"

I have seen a good many boys go wildly excited with the fidgets over wildcats of difficulty that are not any more real than the one the old man fired at.

There are other boys who mean to do right, but they do it in a sort of a fidgety way. They are like balky horses that pull by fits and starts, and so they never get very much done.

Let me tell you some things about a fidgety boy.

A fidgety boy never stands well in his classes at school.

A fidgety boy never can be depended upon in a pinch.

A fidgety boy is never happy long at a time.

A fidgety boy is always scared on examination day.

A fidgety boy is never popular with his employer.

A fidgety boy makes his mother anxious.

A fidgety boy grows up into a fidgety, unreliable sort of a man, who is likely to be lost sight of in the race of life, and to fail of ever doing anything worth recounting.

Have something worth doing, and then do it patiently and steadily day by day.

FURY.

ONE of the most beautiful of sights is to see the sails of a ship filled by a spanking breeze that wafts it over the blue waves toward the harbor where it is sailing. But one of the most terrible things ever seen is a ship caught by the wind when it is in a fury.

A boy's temper is like that. It is not a bad thing to be high-tempered. High temper makes a boy quick, and alert, and courageous ; but it is a terrible thing when the boy no longer governs his temper, and the temper every little while flies into a fury and governs the boy.

Many boys think that it is a very small matter to fly into a fury and do all sorts of silly, wicked things because they are "mad." They excuse themselves by saying : "I know it was not right ; but then, I'm so high-tempered." But temper must be governed, or no one can tell to what shame, and even crime, it may lead in the end.

There are two incidents which stand out in my youth that impressed me very much with the danger of temper when let loose into fury. I once knew a man who was a very nice, well-to-do farmer in many ways, and for the most of the time was a good neighbor and a kind and indulgent father. But he had a quick temper, and had never been taught to control it when he was a boy, and when he flew into a fury

it was something horrible. I shall never forget one morning when I saw him harnessing up a pair of fine young horses. One of them was a blooded mare for which he had paid \$250 only a few days before. He was, of course, very proud of her and thought she would make a valuable animal ; but she was not well trained yet, and was nervous and skittish, and as he was putting her into her place she became frightened at something, and, making a sudden movement, stepped on one of his feet. It was, indeed, very painful. The man's temper went into a wild fury at once ; with a savage jerk on the bridle reins he threw the mare back on her haunches, and grabbing up the neckyoke of the buggy, struck her a blow over the head with all his power. He happened to strike just the right place to do fatal execution, and the beautiful mare fell dead in a moment. Of course, he was ashamed of himself and regretted it very much, but that would not bring the mare back to life. His fury made him an insane man at such times.

The other incident was still more serious in its results. It concerned a young man whom I knew when I was a boy, who was only three or four years older than myself. He was a boy in a very good family. His father and mother were excellent people, but they made the great mistake of failing to teach their son to curb his temper. He had lots of good qualities, but when he got mad he was wild, and in his fury would hurl anything he had in his hand at the boy with whom he was mad. He was dreaded on that account, although he would have been very popular if it had not been for that. Time passed on

and he became the village blacksmith. He was a big strong fellow, and was a very fine workman. He had a natural bent for tools and machinery, was very industrious and economical, and was getting along splendidly with his business. He was married to a very beautiful and good woman, and it seemed as though he was going to have a happy life. One day I was passing his blacksmith shop when I heard angry words, and, turning to see what was the matter, I saw that he was in some sort of dispute with a young fellow who was standing at the door. Suddenly the young man said something to him that set his temper on fire, and it flamed into fury in a moment. I saw the wild look that came into his face as he grabbed up a big harrow tooth that he had been sharpening on his anvil, and with all the power of his strong arm hurled it at the young man's head. The sharp point of the harrow tooth pierced the skull and tore its way into the brain and the fellow died before night. The blacksmith was completely broken down with remorse for his deed. He was arrested and tried, and sent to the penitentiary. While he was in jail his wife died of a broken heart. What became of him after his term expired I never knew, but the ungoverned fury of his temper had blighted and ruined many lives.

Boys, govern your temper! Treat your temper as a wise man treats a high-mettled horse—put a good curb bit in the mouth, and master yourself, and hold yourself in to do what is right. You will need God's help in doing that, and if you ask Him He will strengthen you to noble and good living.

DON'T BRAG.

BRAGGING comes from thinking too much of one's self, and that is always a very great blunder. The Bible says that if a boy grows up to be a man wise in his own conceit—that is, thinking too much of himself—there is more hope for a fool than there is for him. Of course, there can't be very much hope for a fool, and the chance must be slim indeed for a bragging, big-headed, conceited fellow, if he has less chance yet.

A boy who is always bragging about what he can do, and about his own good qualities, never gets any sympathy when he gets into trouble. People are rather pleased to see him taken down. The story is told of a young fellow, scarcely more than a boy, who was in the Confederate army in the civil war. He thought he was very brave, and bragged a good deal to his companions about his courage, and let on that he was just spoiling for a fight all the time. To hear him talk you would have thought that nothing would please him so much as to have a chance to fight the enemy. One night it came his turn to stand guard. The part of the army to which he belonged was guarding a mountain pass which was densely wooded and swampy. The marshy ground abounded in

bull-frogs of huge size, and the trees were, many of them, roosting places for owls.

It was a wild and windy night when this young braggart was called upon to do guard duty.

About one o'clock in the morning, when the sky was black with clouds, and the wind sighed in a lonesome, homesick sort of way through the trees, an owl on a near-by limb hooted :

"Whoo-whoo-who are you?"

"John Spreeler," exclaimed the scared boy, trembling in his boots.

Just at that moment a bull-frog, a few yards away, in deep, guttural tones, seemed to say :

"Sur-sur-surround him."

"I'll be hanged if you do," exclaimed Spreeler, as he fired his musket in the air and broke for camp, which had been thrown into the wildest confusion by the alarm, which was supposed to mean that the enemy was attacking the outposts. When they found that the young fellow had been scared out by the owls and the bull-frogs it was a long while before he heard the last of it.

It is always silly to brag about being able to do things which we do not understand. It is always a great deal better to say, honestly, "I don't know," when that is the truth, than to assume to know everything, and come to grief when it is too late to save ourselves from shame and disgrace.

Nobody ever respects a boy or a man who is always bragging about his courage, or his strength, or his good sense. But everybody admires a boy who in

an honest, straightforward way is ready to do his share of the work and stand out manfully for his share of the reward.

There is a story of a young sailor who, during the war of 1812, was on board an American frigate when, under Captain Decatur, she captured the frigate *Macedonian*, and brought her a prize to New York.

On board Decatur's ship was a little boy about nine years old, commonly called Bill. He was not considered one of the regular crew, but he shared the mess of a generous sailor who had two years before taken him in order to help his widowed mother. When the *Macedonian* hove in sight, and all hands were clearing ship for action, the little fellow stepped up to Commodore Decatur.

"And it please you, captain," he said, "I wish my name might be put down on the rolls."

"And what for, my lad?" inquired the commander.

"So that I can draw a share of the prize money, sir," answered he.

Pleased with the spirit and confident courage of the little hero, his name was ordered on the list; but the moment was too important to say more. After the prize was taken Decatur thought of the little sailor boy and called him up.

"Well, Bill," said he, "we have taken her, and your share of the prize, if we get her safe in, will be about two hundred dollars. What will you do with it?"

"I'll send one-half of it to my mother, sir, and the other half shall send me to school."

"That's noble!" cried the commodore.

From that day Commodore Decatur took an interest in him, and it is said that he became a good officer.

While people do not like a fellow to brag and boast, everybody admires a manly boy who seeks to make the very best out of himself, and there are always those who are ready to help such a boy to a fair chance.

DON'T FRET.

IF you do, it will spoil your beauty. I know it is easy enough for a boy to say, "I don't care how I look. It's a girl's business to be pretty." That's all very well, but every boy that has any snap in him at all wants to look well, and wants other people to think he looks well. Nothing spoils a boy's countenance and makes it look disagreeable quicker than fretfulness.

Did you ever gather persimmons? Down South the persimmons are a fruit that grows wild in the woods; they get yellow and soft like a plum, but you do not dare to eat one until the frost comes and sweetens them. Both opossums and boys are very fond of persimmons. But a green persimmon will pucker a boy's mouth in more ways at one time than anything else I know of. And yet I have seen a plenty of boys who never saw a persimmon, who go about with their mouths puckered up by a peevish, fretful spirit until they are ugly, when the Lord intended that they should be very nice-looking boys.

Another reason for not fretting is that it makes every one dread to see you coming. I don't know of anything more uncomfortable to have around than a fretful, peevish boy. He not only is miserable himself, but he won't let any one else have a good time.

We all like to have folks think well of us ; that is, all good people do. It is a very bad sign in a boy when he gets so that he doesn't care what people think of him. We ought to live and act so that our presence with people will be pleasant to them. If a boy is good-humored, looks on the bright side of things, bears a pleasant face, and speaks cheerfully and hopefully, people will be glad to have him about. His coming will always be hailed with happiness, and he will be missed when he is gone.

This is not only a matter of sentiment, but has its effect on all the after life of the boy in his business and social relations. Suppose a boy is fretful and peevish and makes himself disagreeable to his teachers and schoolmates. When school is over and that boy wants to go into business, and an employer asks about him from the people who knew him as a boy, you know very well what they will say. It will be something like this : " Well, I don't know what he may be now, but he was the most fretful, peevish, disagreeable boy in the class, and everybody hated the very ground he walked on." I don't think that would help a boy very much in getting a position. You would like to have them brighten up when your name is mentioned, and say : " Oh, he was the most cheerful, happy-faced fellow in all our class. No matter how hard the lesson, no matter how dull the day, he always saw the bright side of things, and never made the rest of us gloomy by his fretting." Suppose there were given to a business man in search of a boy two such recommendations concerning two

young fellows. Have you any doubt which one of them would get the place? The first boy would not stand a ghost of a show. He might be stronger in many ways than the other, but his habit of fretfulness would bar him out.

You ought not to fret, because fretfulness will make you unable to do your best work. Many folks use up the strength in fretting which would go far toward finishing the job they are fretting about. Fretfulness spoils the appetite. It takes the brightness out of the sunshine. It throws gloom over the beautiful picture. Did you ever look through blue eyeglasses or goggles, and see how everything took on the color of the glasses through which you were looking? Well, fretfulness is a kind of goggles, and if a boy wears them, everything he sees all day long looks crooked and twisted and wrong.

I have seen boys that were fretting because their parents were not rich like some other boy's. parents whom they knew about, and it seemed to them that they had a very hard time, and really nothing to make them happy, because they had to work hard every day and wear plain clothes and go on a street car instead of in a pony cart. Now, it was all the fault of the goggles—the fretful goggles—that these boys had on that their lot seemed so hard. Their parents were good and respectable, and loved them devotedly. They had enough to eat and wear, had good, healthy bodies, nothing the matter with their limbs or their eyes or their ears, and had just as good a chance to succeed as Abraham Lincoln, or James A. Garfield,

or William McKinley; yet all these bright and beautiful blessings and prospects looked blue and ugly to them because they looked through fretful goggles.

Don't fret, because fretfulness will grow on you. If a boy frets through the years of boyhood, he will become a fretful, unhappy young man, and will come to be that most unhappy and disagreeable of all specimens of humanity—a fretful, complaining old man. To be a noble man, and a gracious, lovable old man, requires a wholesome, good-humored, sweet-spirited boy, who does his part bravely, and trusts God to bring things out right.

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DON'T LOAF.

NOTHING can be worse for a boy than the habit of loafing around the street corners, or, indeed, of loafing anywhere. No good ever comes to the loafer. I never have read yet, in the history of any great general, or orator, or poet, or inventor, or merchant, that in his boyhood he was noted for loafing or lounging about. Greatness never comes that way. It comes to the people who are wide-awake to opportunities for acquiring knowledge or for making themselves useful.

There is a great demand for boys who are not looking for a place to lounge, but to help. The story is told of a boy who went to answer the advertisement of a large drug store firm in New York city. There were a great many boys applying for a place, and among them a little fellow accompanied by his aunt. The merchant looked at him and said: "Can't take him; places all full. Besides, he is too small."

"I know he is small," said the woman, "but he is willing and faithful."

There was a twinkle in the boy's eyes that made the merchant decide to try him. When his partner saw him he said that he "didn't see what they wanted with such a boy; he wasn't bigger than a pint of cider." But he was set to work.

A few days later a call was made for a volunteer to stay at the store all night. All the boys hung back except this little fellow, who jumped like a shot to offer himself. In the middle of the night the merchant looked in to see if all was right in the store, and found the new boy scissoring labels.

"What are you doing?" he said. "I did not tell you to work nights."

"I know you did not tell me to, but I thought I might as well be doing something."

In the morning the cashier got orders to double that boy's wages.

A little while later Barnum's circus came to New York, and there was a big parade through the streets. As it passed the drug store all hands in the place rushed to see the lions and elephants. A thief, who had been watching for this chance, entered at the rear door to seize something, but in a twinkling found himself in the clutches of the little boy, who screamed till help came and captured the burglar. Not only was a robbery prevented, but valuable articles taken from other stores were found in the thief's clothing. When his employer asked him why he stayed behind to watch when all others quit their work, he replied, "You told me never to leave the store when others were absent, and I thought I'd stay."

It don't take such a boy long to get to be partner in the store where he works, but a lounge will soon lounge himself out of the best position.

The difference between a successful boy and triumphant young man and a tramp is usually the

difference in the way the two start out to spend their leisure time. Many a boy learns bad habits and gets to be a slave to vice, and becomes tangled up with companions who are like weights about his neck, during the time when he is out of school or away from business. There is an old proverb which says, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." The devil always has plenty of carpenters and machinists to set to work in the mind and in the heart of a lounging, loafing boy.

On the other hand, many a boy lays the foundation for great success in life by using his leisure hours in such a way as to increase his knowledge or bring him such friends as will help him along in a noble career.

Two young fellows once stood at the same table as workmen in a big factory in Philadelphia. They were allowed an hour for dinner every day. Each of them was interested in something, and used about three-fourths of his noon hour to win success, and both succeeded pretty well.

One used his daily hour, as soon as his lunch was eaten, in working out the invention of a machine for sawing a block of wood into almost any desired shape. When his invention was complete he sold his patent for a fortune, and in the course of years became himself a great manufacturer.

And the other young fellow, what did he do? Well, he spent all the time he could spare from his lunch every day, for nearly a year, in the very difficult task of teaching a little dog to stand up on his hind feet and dance a jig. To be sure, he succeeded, but the

result was that at the end of the time the dog knew just about as much as his master. He is now getting to be an old man, and he is working for the same wages as when he was a young fellow, and curses his luck because he is still poor, while the young fellow who used to work beside him at the same table now owns the factory where they both worked together in their boyhood. One used his leisure time for profit, and the other lounged it all away.

If you want to succeed at anything good or true in life, don't lounge.

DON'T BULLY.

I TOOK a long railroad ride last fall and greatly enjoyed the beautiful autumn pictures, where the trees stood out by the thousand on the hillsides like great flaming torches. Some of them were yellow as gold, and others were all aglow with crimson. And then in their midst, here and there, would be a group of dark evergreens, which would greatly add to the beauty of the picture. But once while we were running through a forest of these gayly dressed trees I saw a fine large maple which had lost all its leaves, so that its long branches stretched up entirely barren, except that in the very top of the center of the tree was one of the biggest hornets' nests I ever saw. I don't know why the leaves had taken flight so much earlier than their neighbors, unless possibly it was because they did not like the company of the hornets.

Now, boys, do you know that when I saw that empty tree with its hornets' nest left, I immediately thought of you and of my promised talk to you about "The Bully." I was born on a farm and brought up out in the country, and I am very well acquainted with hornets. My experience is that a yellow jacket, or a wasp, or a bumblebee, is a gentleman compared to a hornet. Of all the things that sting he is the most vicious and mean, and when I saw that hornets'

nest all alone in the top of the tree, the only thing left of all the year's crop, I said to myself: "That is what happens to a boy who begins to give way to an ugly temper and a selfish spirit, and begins to bully those who are around him. If he keeps at it, he will get worse and worse, until the bullying hornets will build their nests sure and strong in his head and heart and there won't be room for anything else, and that boy will come to be just one great big bullying hornets' nest."

During the spring and summer time that old maple tree had a great many beautiful things about it: first there were the fragrant buds, and then the handsome leaves, and the birds which often came into the shade to sing and chirp, and the squirrels that made paths up and down the big limbs; but now these are gone and only those bad-tempered bullies, the hornets, are left.

That is the way a boy comes to be a bully. No boy ever yet became a bully all at once. It always comes about by degrees. At first he is just a little bit fretful and peevish and wants his own way. He likes to have the best seat everywhere, and is not willing to give up any of his playthings to please his sister, or brother, or some little neighbor. Then if this spirit is not put out it grows, so that he not only wants his own things without sharing with anybody, but wants to take the toys of his playmates; and if they are smaller than he is, he makes it unpleasant for them unless they do as he says.

The bully is always a coward; he never pitches on

to a boy bigger than himself. He is the "terror" of small boys and little girls. Many a boy gets on the road to being a bully before he knows it. It always begins in selfishness. A boy who is unselfish and kind and generous, always pleased to have others happy, can never by any possible means become a bully. But bullies are made out of selfishness, and if a boy gives way to this ugly spirit in him, which makes him want to crowd others out of the way so that he can have the best place, it has its effect on his temper, and makes him sour and vinegary and disagreeable to every one.

At first and for a long time it will be with this boy as it was with the old tree that I saw; he won't be all selfishness or all meanness. There will be many good points to him, and his parents and his teachers hope he will overcome it; but if he keeps on yielding to that bully spirit he will finally lose all these better things out of his nature, as the old maple tree lost its leaves and the birds and squirrels, and had nothing left but the hornets.

Nobody loves a bully. When a bully really goes to seed and gets his hornets' nest full of ugly ways so that he is full of stings, and cares for nobody but himself, he is a contemptible creature that nobody cares for.

The only way to make sure that you will never make a bully is to begin now to restrain yourself from being selfish toward those with whom you live. If a boy is polite, and courteous, and obedient to his mother and father; if he is generous towards his

brothers and sisters, always seeking to give them the best of everything, and to help to make them happy ; and if among his playmates at school and his young acquaintances he is always seeking to have others served first, and is every ready to deny himself that he may have the pleasure of making some one else happy, he will take out of his heart every germ of the bullying spirit, and will grow up to be a gentleman instead of a bully. If I were to ask you which you wanted to be when you came to be a man, a bully or a gentleman, every one of you would say, " Of course, I want to be a gentleman." But no selfish, ill-natured bully was ever yet a gentleman, and if you want to grow up to be a gentleman it is high time to begin.

"LAUGH AND GROW FAT."

ALL other things being equal, the cheerful boy, who is good-humored with himself as well as with other folks, will succeed better than the one who is gloomy.

This old proverb, "Laugh and grow fat," no doubt sprung from the fact that a merry, cheerful spirit helps one's appetite and health. It is said in the Bible that "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." And I am very sure that is very nice medicine to take. There is another kind of medicine they call the "blues," which is more bitter than any quinine. But no doctor ever sugar-coated his pills to make them as easy to take as a merry, cheerful heart. You will not get any genuine laughter out of a boy unless he has a cheerful heart, for the kind of laughter that makes people healthy and fat is the kind that springs from a happy heart.

Now, the way to have this good kind of laughter is to make certain of the merry, cheerful heart. In Proverbs it is said, "He that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast."

If a boy is cross and surly in his spirit, nothing makes him happy. The best breakfast in the world would not taste good to such a fellow. His father

and mother seem stern and severe to him, other boys displease him, and his work seems like slavery. But if the heart is merry, then everything else will get a cheerful tinge from his own good humor. Did you never notice how different things looked on a cloudy, dark day, than on a day that is full of sunshine and genial warmth? The sunshine makes things sparkle and glow, and changes the colors not only of the water and the sky, but of trees and flowers and the greensward. So a boy's spirit — by which I mean the condition of his heart and feelings—changes the appearance of everybody and everything that he has to do with during the day.

Solomon says again, "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance." And that sort of countenance is very catching. If a boy at home comes down in the morning with a smile on his face, and a happy spirit which makes him laugh easily, ten to one everybody in the family will catch the smiles from him, and the breakfast and all the morning conversation will be the happier because of his good humor.

Don't let any boy think this is not important, for it is one of the most important things in the world. All along through life you will find that the cheerful, happy man, whose laughter is spontaneous—that is, just gushes out of him as a spring leaps out from under a rock on the hillside—will have a great advantage in any profession or business over the man who is gloomy or heavy-browed. Most people know a good thing when they see it; and they will give the preference to the man who makes them smile over

the other man who is glum and gruff and makes them frown every time they see him.

Now, I can give you two or three simple rules by which any boy can get the laughing spirit, and if you have the laughing spirit, it won't be very long until you get the laughing habit, but you will never have the habit unless you have the spirit first.

A certain John Chinaman was having his picture taken, and the photographer told him that if he did not cheer up and smile, the picture would be ugly. John said, "When Chinaman feel ugly inside, he no look pretty outside." And that is as true of American boys as it is of Chinamen.

In the first place, you must do right. To have a happy heart you must be sure that you are doing right; if a boy feels that he has done wrong, the wrong will haunt him and chase the smiles away. If you find out that you have done wrong, repent of it at once; ask God to forgive you, and if it is a wrong against anybody else, go straight to the person, confess your wrong, and ask forgiveness. When you have done everything that you can do to make it right, you will be astonished to notice how the big black load will be lifted off your heart, and how merry and happy it will be again.

Another rule is never to hold a grudge against anybody; if you were to hang a big black blanket up over the window, it would not keep the sunshine out any more surely than a grudge will keep all the happiness out of your heart. If anybody does you a wrong, forgive him, and try to make peace with him, for that is the way to happiness.

Another great rule—and it is one of the surest recipes for happiness in the world—is to try to do some kind deed to some one else every day ; don't ever let any day pass without doing something for some one that will add to his happiness. The pleasure you have given him will somehow find its way back into your heart, and give you as much cheerfulness as it does the one to whom you have been kind. Here are three pills a day to make a boy glad : First, do right ; second, hold no grudge against any one ; third, do some one a kindness. If you will take these pills in cold water, before and after meals, three times a day, you will laugh and grow fat, and all the people that know you will have a better appetite.

A WOODPECKER AT THE HEART.

DOWN in Baltimore a big, round, fine-looking telegraph pole stood in its place along the line holding up a lot of wires that carried the news to all parts of the world. There was not anything about it that one noticed from the sidewalk to distinguish it from any of the others in that long line of poles that were like soldiers on guard, up and down the street as far as the eye could reach. I suppose this pole would never have been heard of except for a strange thing that happened one Sunday morning about the time people were going to church. Suddenly, without any warning, like some great strong man struck by an unseen bullet, the people were startled at hearing that pole groan, and then, with a snapping, tearing, grinding sound, the upper portion fell to the street, dragging the wires down with it and leaving about twenty-five feet still standing. There was not even a brisk breeze blowing, and the crowd that soon gathered was filled with astonishment.

Finally a man came up who said that he lived near, and that years ago he had been disturbed while quietly reading his paper on the porch by a sound as if boys were tapping on the door. After a while he

noticed a bird, a real, live woodpecker, working energetically with its sharp-pointed bill against the telegraph pole. This, he said, was fully five years before.

Then somebody else remembered having seen a bird pegging away at the pole. Just then a small boy came along and added that he had seen a bird light on the pole and was about to shoot at it with his slingshot, when the bird disappeared in a hole in the pole. Another boy came up and declared that he had seen two birds go into the hole. A doubtful man standing near declared that they had been mistaken, for no woodpecker in the world could have ever cut through wood like that, if he had got at it fifty years before instead of five.

The boy thus challenged climbed up the pole to investigate. Sure enough, there, right where the pole had broken, was the hollow where the woodpeckers had cut out their nest, and what was more, and really unanswerable testimony, was a poor little woodpecker, half frightened to death. The boy took possession of it, and the crowd scattered, talking about the wonderful thing they had seen.

I saw something like that once, only it was a good deal more serious. It was a big, strong man, who had been successful in business and gathered together a great fortune. People trusted him and believed in him; and he not only handled his own business, but a great many other people, who did not have much money, entrusted to him their little all. He lived in a fine house, and had his yacht and his

carriages, and his family enjoyed a very luxurious existence. The man was a director in a great many business enterprises, and he stood before the world as one of the strongest and truest of men.

Suddenly the man disappeared. There was consternation everywhere. People supposed that he was the victim of some foul play. But before long his dead body was found in the woods, and it became certain that he had committed suicide. Then little by little it all came out,—that years and years back a little woodpecker of dishonesty had begun its work on the round, strong trunk of his business life, and had eaten its way in and made its nest there. For years he had been going on living this double life. Before the world he was honest and public-spirited and true, but in secret he was a corrupt and dishonest scoundrel. It had gone on until the strength of the man was eaten out, both financially and morally, and then there came the crash and down he went to the ground.

I think these two stories, which teach the same lesson, are good stories for boys to ponder. Look out for the little woodpeckers; they cannot do much in a minute or an hour, but in the long run they can destroy a big tree or a big man.

The wise man of old said it was well to look out for the little foxes that spoil the grapes. It does not require an elephant going about through the vineyards and trampling the vines down to play havoc with the fruit; a little fox climbing about with stealthy step can spoil them just as surely. Be on

your guard against the little sins. The sins that make a great noise and large display of vulgarity often carry their own antidote, because they shock us and make us afraid. But the little woodpecker that comes tapping at the heart, he is the fellow to look out for !

THE LOST OAR.

I WELL remember a little fishing trip which I took once when I was living in Southern Oregon. I was pastor of a circuit down on the Umpqua River, which represented all outdoors for over a hundred miles on every side. I was living at Scottsburg, up to which point the little steamers came.

Several miles below Scottsburg there was a small stream which put into the Umpqua River from the left, which was said to be very good fishing. I persuaded a young fellow about town to go with me, and we determined to give it a fair trial for trout. The steamer went down by it every morning about the right time, and so we decided to go down on the steamer with a boat and row back whenever we should get tired of fishing. Everything went well going down; the steamer ran the few miles down current in fifteen or twenty minutes, and while the captain slowed up we slipped our boat off into the water, threw our lunch and fishing tackle into it, jumped in ourselves, and in a moment more were swinging up and down on the big swell made by the stern wheel.

We rowed around a little point which hid the mouth of the small creek where we were to fish, and

then for half a mile or so up to the head of the tide-water on the little stream. Here the stream became full of boulders, and the water came splashing and plunging down over them in a way that always makes a trout fisherman's blood tingle in his veins.

It was a raw sort of a day, raining now and then in a sort of webfoot drizzle, but we had rubber coats and rubber boots, and waded and fished without any reference to the weather. It was just the best sort of a day for trout, and the water was ideal for them, and yet we didn't get them. We had not fished very long before we made up our minds that somebody had played a huge joke on us in sending us to that stream for trout. Now and then we would see a big sucker living his lazy, indolent life at the bottom, but after fishing from half-past seven o'clock till twelve, we had only three little trout to represent all our hard morning's work. But there is one good thing about fishing, especially about whipping a mountain stream for trout—you are sure to catch a glorious appetite, whether you get fish or not.

After lunch we fished uselessly down again to the boat, and concluded we would make our way home. It was very quiet up in the sheltered canyon where we were, but when we rowed out around the point into the Umpqua River we found that there was a tremendously stiff breeze blowing up the river, while the tide was going out. The young fellow that was with me lost his hat overboard, and releasing the oars a moment to get it, one of them slipped out of its place and floated down the tide. It did not occur to either

of us at first that this was a serious accident, as it seemed a very easy thing to take the other oar and paddle with the tide fast enough to overtake it. So it would have been easy if there had not been this stiff wind blowing. The floating oar gave no resistance to the wind, but swung along rapidly with the tide. Our rather large boat with the two of us in it caught the wind, and, work as hard as we could, that oar gained on us so fast that we soon saw it was useless trying to get it. Then we found ourselves in a very uncomfortable situation. We were several miles from home, and with wind and tide so evenly matched against each other it was hard work making any headway.

There were no houses along the river at that time, and no place where we could hope to get another oar nearer than home. We tried paddling, but soon saw that with that alone it would be midnight or more before we got home. Finally a happy thought struck me, and taking off my rubber coat I managed to fasten the oar up for a mast and tie the rubber coat to it, so that by holding it off to one side it served for a sail. It wasn't much of a sail, but it turned the tide for us, and we soon saw we were making headway up the stream. In this way, shivering and wet and disgusted, we floated home in three hours. Of course, there was a crowd of loafing fellows at the landing grinning at us, and shouting out: "Where's your fish?" "Where's your other oar?" None of these questions seemed to us particularly funny at the time.

If you are really anxious to have a moral from this story, you may find it in this advice: Hold on to your oar. Your good name is an oar. You can pull with it against the tide toward success. Lose it and you will soon find that you are drifting, with all the odds against you. Hold on to your oar!

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A FRANK YOUTH.

THERE is no compliment a boy can have paid him which goes for more on first introduction than that he is an entirely frank youth. The word "frank" has a very interesting origin. It comes from those rugged and hard-handed German tribes that drove the Romans back from the Rhine thirteen hundred years ago. They were called Franks because they were honorably distinguished by their love of freedom and their scorn of a lie.

When we say that a boy is a frank boy, we mean that he is straightforward, and genuine, and sincere. It is a great quality to wear. Sly, deceptive ways may deceive for a time, but they are like veneering—it soon wears through, and then the article looks worse than if it had never been veneered; or like brass which has been washed with gold—when the gold wears through, it seems more contemptible than if it had never claimed to be so rich. But frankness never wears through. It is pure gold all the way.

If a boy is perfectly frank, you know just where to find him every time. He can always look you straight in the eye, because he has nothing to conceal. He expects to succeed, not by covering up his defects, whether in his lessons at school or in his work at the store, but by the real, honest value of his work.

He knows he will make mistakes and blunders, but if he frankly does his best there will be so much good honest work that his teacher, or employer, will be pleased to have him rather than the boy who never makes any mistakes or blunders that show on the surface, but whom he is never quite sure that he can trust.

This quality of frankness goes on gaining increasing value all the way through life in whatever profession or trade a boy selects for his life work. People often laugh about the tricks of lawyers, but it is not the tricky lawyer who wins the great places at the bar ; it is rather the men who would scorn to win by a trick, and who would stand by their word at whatever cost. In his day, Abraham Lincoln was said to be the greatest lawyer before a jury in the middle West, and one great reason was because of his perfect frankness. Lincoln never claimed anything for his client that did not seem to him to be perfectly fair and honest. The other lawyers said of Lincoln that he always began, when talking to a jury, by seeming to give his case all away, until many times his client and fellow-attorneys were scared at his conceding so much. He would state his opponent's case more strongly and clearly than he could do it himself, but by doing that he was able to impress on the jury his perfect frankness with them, and they believed him and trusted him, and if he had a good case he was sure to win.

A doctor who has a reputation for being deceitful with his patients loses very much of his power as a

physician, and will very soon lose business. People want their physician to be frank and straightforward with them.

The same thing is true of the preacher. Nobody is more contemptible than a preacher who tries to win his cause in any way by deceit or by the covering up of truth. Frankness must always be his crown of honor.

And so we might go on and name every avenue of life. Frankness is just as necessary for the boy behind the counter selling dry goods, as it is for the lawyer, or doctor, or preacher. The popular man in the store is the one whom the customers can trust to be perfectly frank and trustworthy with them about the goods. He may lose a sale sometimes by it, but in the long run he draws the customers to the store.

The Bible is always on the side of frankness, and we are assured in many ways that the man who tries to get on by covering up things is sure to fail, while he who goes forth open-hearted, confessing all his faults but striving ever to do right, will prosper.

One of the most attractive things about Jesus was His frankness. He was perfectly straightforward with people. He never tried to win them by deceiving them, and in one of His conversations He said that people who were always trying to do right were not afraid to be frank and open in their conduct. He said if people were doing evil things that they were ashamed of, they would want to stay in the dark so as to cover up their bad work ; but if they were doing right they would be glad to have plenty of light, so

that what they were doing could be seen by everybody. It is always the honest man who wants a bright street. The more electric light you have on the street the better he likes it. It is the thief who dreads the light.

Jesus is the Light of the world, and if we open our hearts and let Him come in, it is like opening the windows for the sunshine. He fills the soul with cheer and the whole life with frankness and honor.

A HOT-BOX.

I WAS traveling across the great State of Iowa, not long since, in the night. I had retired early after a long, exacting day's work, hoping to get a good night's sleep. About one o'clock in the morning I was rudely awakened by the conductor taking me by the shoulder, turning me over on my back, and flashing a lantern in my face. For a moment I supposed the train had been "held up," and I began to think of my watch and my money, and what other valuables I possessed. But as soon as he got me awake enough to understand, the conductor said :

"There is a hot-box on this car, and we have been fooling along trying to get it quieted down for two or three hours. But we can do nothing with it, and are going to leave the car here, so you will have to get up and dress, and go into another car."

It was a terribly cold night, and you can imagine it was not at all pleasant to get up at that hour and make the exchange of cars, especially when you had to leave your lower berth and climb upstairs on the next going to bed. But there was no help for it, and though some of the passengers grumbled, and some of the younger ones cried, while some philosophical old travelers joked one another on the situation, they all had to go.

I, being one of the philosophers who had come to know that the only wisdom in traveling is to take things as they come and make the best of them, concluded that I had struck a good illustration for my boys, for I have seen more than one boy in trouble over a "hot-box." I think of a boy just now who is a very nice fellow for the major part of the time, and so long as things go all right with him he is kind-hearted and good-humored, loves his mother passionately, is devoted to his father and to his brothers and sisters. He is really a very fine, manly fellow in many ways. But if things go wrong, especially if it comes of a sudden on him, he gets a hot axle very quick, and the first thing you know, the flames shoot right up out of the box, and, as the saying is, he "goes all to pieces." His parents hope that they will be able to bring him to see the great danger of a wreck from this sort of hot temper, and that he will come to master himself and control it; if he does not, there is sure to be a very sad and serious outcome, which will bring sorrow to all the people who love him as well as to himself.

A doctor was telling me the other day of another boy who is just now laid up with a "hot-box." It came from bicycle-riding. Now, of course, everybody knows by this time what a fine thing a bicycle is if rightly handled. It furnishes good exercise in the open air, gives a boy a fine chance to see pretty little nooks and spots in the country and in the park, and has about it a sort of breeziness which tends to develop good spirits as well as good muscles. But

a bicycle hasn't any sense ; all the brains must come from the boy who rides it, and if it is over-ridden it is sure to make trouble for that boy. This boy whom the doctor was telling me about is a very strong, vigorous fellow, or at least he was until he got this "hot-box." But he was proud of the fact that he could make better speed, and ride more miles without stopping, than any boy of his acquaintance. He was cautioned by his father and mother and many of his older friends against over-riding, but he felt strong and thought he knew best. And so he doubled himself up like a monkey and drove his wheel for all there was in it. The result is that a very serious heart trouble has been developed, and the doctors are fearful that he is permanently injured. He might have ridden with reasonable exertion every day and have been the stronger for it. But his over-exertion has brought on this hot-box that threatens to end his life, or if not that, to leave him handicapped at the very beginning of life's race.

Boys should remember, when thinking about their health, that it is a great deal easier to keep well and strong than it is to get patched up again after they have made themselves sick by over-exertion. Indeed, it is always better to keep the box cool to begin with, than to depend on cooling it off after it has once become heated. The boy with a quick temper may say silly, wicked things in five minutes that will leave their sting in some dear hearts as long as they are in the world, and give him cause for regret for many, many years. And the boy who gets the

hot-box by carelessly overdoing in sport, finds that getting it cooled down again, so that his physical health is as fresh and buoyant as it was before, is not an easy matter.

The way to have a happy, healthy life is to live actively and earnestly, but to master ourselves, and always keep the hand of reason and good judgment with a firm grip on the handle-bars.

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SIDE-TRACKED.

MAKING a long journey across the continent awhile ago, the train on which I was traveling, after being snow-bound for a night, found itself ten hours late. That would not have been so bad if we had had an open road ahead of us, and a good, fair chance to make up time ; but the trouble was that, simply because we were so late, we lost the right of way and had to creep along, stopping often at places where we were not scheduled on the timetable to stop, to get orders, and find out whether we could go on or not. Other trains which were on time were given the right of way over us, though ordinarily we were the big train of the road. But we were soon given to understand that a train, like a man, loses its dignity when it gets behind time.

Another bad feature of our being late, and one which caused us to lose still more time, was that we missed connections with our dining-car, and for the last two days of the trip had to take our chances at the wayside stations, and instead of eating our meals while we were whirling away across the continent toward our journey's end, had to be side-tracked for it, and eat some unspeakable things in those wayside inns.

Standing on the side-track, for some other train to go by, while we got later and later, gave me plenty of opportunity for reflection, and suggested to my mind that a train is a good deal like a boy ; that, in order to have proper respect shown him, and to hold his right of way for a fair chance in life, he must keep up to his schedules, and not get behind time.

Sometimes a boy gets side-tracked in his school life. He gets a little drowsy and careless about his work, gets drawn off possibly after outside pleasures with other boys—things maybe that are not bad in themselves, but which are very bad for him, because they take his attention from his books and cause him to fail to pass his examinations, and to drop behind a year in his work. That may not appear so very bad, looking ahead at it, but when a boy really gets side-tracked on that kind of a switch, he is not long in finding out that it is much more serious than it looks from a distance ; and, in all the years to come, throughout his college course or business life, he will never think without shame and mortification of the time when he was side-tracked through his own laziness or indifference. Some boys find that side-track the last station they reach. They lose their tickets there, and become tramps on the ties, so to speak, forever afterwards.

Sometimes we see a boy side-tracked morally. He is drawn away into temptation by the deceptive assurance that to do a thing that is wrong "only just once" is not so very bad. How many boys have been side-tracked on that silly assurance of the evil

one! And so there comes a shock to parents, and relatives, and admiring friends, when they come to know their boy's character. They will be good to him and kind to him, possibly, but that side-track will not be forgotten easily, and many a time, years afterward, though the boy may have repented and been forgiven, and be leading a new life of real goodness, the story of that day when he was side-tracked by his sin will come back to shame and humiliate him.

The way to keep off the side-track is to go steadily along about one's business, doing the right thing and the honest thing every day. Our minds are so constituted that when we work them regularly they draw up the proper amount of nourishment needed, so that our dining-car never misses connection. And what is true of the mind is also true of morals. The only way to live a truly noble life is to live so constantly. Habit is as strong in good as in bad deeds. One gets into the habit of speaking the whole truth, of doing work thoroughly. One gets into the habit of being charitable, and generous, and kind, and patient. But these habits can be acquired only by running up to our schedule every day. Once make a break and get hours behind time, and it becomes easy to side-track us.

One of the sad things that successful people meet are those who, once hopeful and with promising outlook, have been side-tracked so many times that they have lost all their courage, all their hope. They have lost, to use the railroad language, their right of way,

and they creep timidly from station to station, and stand shivering on the side-track, wherever there is a switch to let them off, waiting for somebody to say whether they can go on or not.

Keep your right of way, boys! Keep it by honestly and prayerfully doing your level best every day. Don't bother about to-morrow, but for to-day keep up to the schedule and bring the train in on time!

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THE GREAT DIVIDE.

ONE has no idea how large our country is until he crosses it on a railroad train from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And perhaps even then we have a very faint idea of the vast extent of it as compared with the conception the people had who crossed the great plains with ox teams and the old canvas-backed "prairie schooners," forty or fifty years ago. My father was six months, in 1852, going from St. Louis to Portland, Oregon, with ox teams. The country must have seemed a great deal larger to him than it did to me when I first came across the continent from the Pacific to the Atlantic in six days.

A country so large as ours can be expected to have large rivers, extensive valleys, vast lakes, and giant mountains, to set off and make picturesque its scenery. In a western trip one of the most interesting points is what is known as "The Great Divide." Cutting across the country, running nearly north and south, is the Rocky Mountain range, which forms the huge backbone of the United States. All the time as the train runs on through the day, or through the night, you are looking forward to the time when you will cross the divide and be on the other side of the mountains. If you are going across on the Union Pacific route you come to that point very gradually.

For hundreds and hundreds of miles you are climbing steadily upward a few feet every mile, and after a while, though it does get steeper, and you will have to have two or three engines to pull your train up the long grades, yet the great elevation of over eight thousand feet which your train reaches comes about without any sudden shock of surprise.

There is, however, a decided sensation of difference in your feeling when the mountain-top is reached and all the engines are taken off but one, and you go running down the long slopes on the other side, and say to yourself, "I am on the west side of the Rocky Mountains."

The most interesting feature of "The Great Divide" is the fact that it separates the streams of water, so that springs bursting out of the mountain within a few feet of each other will one of them flow toward the west, and after a little join with other small streams in forming a brook which will begin to get a song in its heart, and go dashing and foaming over the rocks until it is, in conjunction with other streams like it, formed into a river that flows away west and south and onward toward the Pacific Ocean ; while the other spring, perhaps not farther away than the distance across your sitting-room, flows to the east, and goes on growing and widening in the same way as the one that flowed west, until it is a river, wide and deep, that pushes onward until it reaches the Mississippi River, and mingles with that great turbid current in its final race for the Gulf of Mexico, and out to the Atlantic Ocean. They began within

a few feet of each other, but after their long journey they find the ocean many thousands of miles apart. It is "The Great Divide" that did it.

Something like that is happening all the time in the lives of boys. They are being divided, separated from each other, by the choices they make even when they seem to be very close together. In many of the choices a boy makes, he is, at the time, all unconscious of the tremendous results that hang upon a momentary decision. Two boys are together on the playground, on a warm spring day, when the air is seductive, and when every healthy boy longs to be in the woods or down by the river, when another lad comes with an insidious temptation to play "hookey," and go for "a good time." It is a real temptation to each of the boys, and both come near to yielding. But one does not yield. He remembers the pained look on his mother's face when he fails to do the right thing, and he recalls the determination he has made to do his best to keep a clear record in school, and so says "No" to the temptation, and goes back to his work. The other boy hesitates for a moment, but yields to the temptation and goes off for the day's sport. Though the boys did not know it, that moment of decision, when one went to the woods and the other walked back to the school-room, was for them "The Great Divide." The one that resisted the temptation and went quietly again to his work, was strengthened in character by his decision, and went on growing stronger in purpose until he became a well-educated, thoroughly disciplined, successful

man. The other boy was weakened and demoralized in every way by yielding to the tempter. He got mixed up with a number of idle and dissolute boys in the excursion, and forever afterwards the current seemed to take him farther and farther away from the right, until he became an idle and dissipated young man.

Ten years later those two boys, who seemed so alike and so near together on that fateful day on the playground, were as far apart in character and prospects as the mouth of the Mississippi is from the outlet of the Columbia River. It was "The Great Divide" of their own choice that brought about this change. Be careful of your decisions.

SNOW-BOUND.

I WAS once snow-bound near the summit of the Rocky Mountains. We were coming from the west, and reached that lofty point just as the belated fragments of a three-weeks' storm were disappearing. No trains had been through for a number of days. Our train stood on a side-track at one point to let four trains go by at five minutes apart that had originally started out a day apart. There are a great many cuts on that part of the road, and when a snow storm comes on the wind drifts these cuts full, and the big snow-plows push their way through it, pressing the snow back against the sides, until when we came along the snow was in many places higher than the tops of the cars, making a great white lane. Sometimes the snow gets so deep and so packed that one of the big rotary plows with a great engine behind it will get stuck in the drift and become entirely helpless, and have to be dug out with shovels.

Although these trains had just come through, and it had stopped snowing, the wind was still driving the snow into the cuts with so much force that it took a great rotary plow twelve hours to clean up the track for us for fifty miles. We were fortunate in not being detained longer, as the people who left San Francisco three days ahead of us reached the east at the same time as ourselves. On some other roads

the trains were snow-bound for several days, and the passengers nearly starved before the railroad companies succeeded in opening the road for travel.

But it is not only on the Rocky Mountains that people get snow-bound. In an intellectual and moral way, people may get snow-bound in the big towns and cities as well as in the mountains. I have seen people whose hearts were so cold and whose manners were so stiff and cheerless that it was impossible for them to get on with other people. They remind me of what a woman said about ministers. She was asked what kind of a minister she liked best, and she replied, "I like one with the chill taken off." She wanted one that was not snow-bound. All other things being equal, the warm-hearted, frank, sympathetic man or woman will have the clear track in any business or profession, and will distance the poor fellow who is snow-bound and frozen in by his own selfishness.

Many of the greatest prizes in politics and statesmanship have been lost and won by the matter of a gracious or a frozen manner. Some of the most powerful men, so far as brains and education and executive ability go, that have ever lived, have failed of their highest ambition when the coveted prize seemed almost within their grasp, because of enemies made by a cold and snow-bound manner. On the other hand, there have been men of much less natural gifts, whose warm hearts and sympathetic interest in everybody they met drew people to them with hooks that were stronger than steel. The story is told of a politician in Congress who once refused to be intro-

duced to Henry Clay, and, when urged to give his reason, his friend at the same time declaring that Mr. Clay was a most lovable man to meet personally, the stubborn objector replied, "I know it! I know it! And that is just the reason I won't be introduced to him. I have known a lot of good Clay-haters to be spoiled entirely by being introduced to him." If Henry Clay had been snow-bound in his manners, there would have been no danger of his capturing his enemies so easily.

Boys ought to cultivate an interest in the welfare of others that will have its effect in warmth and graciousness of manner. Sometimes boys admire a cold, haughty, cynical man, who is in the habit of saying hard and sharp things about people. They make the mistake of thinking that it is a manly thing. But Christ was the most manly man that ever lived, and He was kindness and graciousness itself. Once the people followed Christ out into the country where He had gone to have a little rest and a quiet talk with His disciples, but He did not draw himself up in His shell and freeze these poor people into fear because they had intruded on His quiet. Instead of that, He took the little boy's loaves and fishes—a little peddler boy, no doubt, who had followed the crowd hoping to sell out his small wares—and Christ multiplied them and made a great dinner for the hungry and tired people. He is the one we ought to make our ideal. A boy who follows Christ as the pattern of his life in warm-hearted treatment of others, will never fail in society nor business through being snow-bound.

OBEDIENCE.

IT is a great thing to learn to obey. No man or boy is ever worth anything to the world until he has learned the great lesson of obedience. Many a boy feels it must be a fine thing for one to be at the top in authority and power, so that other people have to obey him, and he does not have to obey anybody. But no one ever learns how to wisely govern other people unless he has first learned the lesson of obedience himself. Obedience, too, is one of those lessons that must be learned in youth or it may never be learned well.

I have just been reading a very interesting story in that bright book of Ernest Seton Thompson's, entitled "Wild Animals I Have Known." I hope all the boys will get it from the public library and read it, if they cannot have a copy for themselves. In it is the story of a black mustang, out on the plains. This mustang was a very beautiful, strong animal, and a splendid pacer. He could pace faster than any horse could run that the cattlemen could bring against him in their efforts to make his capture. He was so beautiful and fleet that five thousand dollars was finally offered for his capture and delivery at the railroad. A great many attempts were made, but all ended in failure. Relays of horses were stationed

at different points, and several men attempted to run down this wild pacer of the desert, but after running several horses to death they were compelled to give it up. At last, however, he was entrapped, and caught, and hobbled. In that helpless condition he was driven toward civilization. But when he got within sight of the ranch-house, he suddenly summoned all the strength he had, and, hobbling up to the edge of a precipice, threw himself down two hundred feet, and was crushed to death on the rocks.

Now, if that splendid black mustang had been taken in hand when he was a colt, how different it would have been ! He would have learned the lesson of obedience then, while he was young, and the harness and the saddle and association with mankind would have seemed as natural to him as the air he breathed. But he ran wild so long that in seeking to make him obey they killed him. Death was easier than obedience.

The same mistake is often made in dealing with boys and men. Obedience is the law of life, and it is impossible to carry on the world without obeying one another, in the proper relations, at every turn of life we take. But when a boy grows up without obeying his father and mother, and without obeying his teachers, he is practically a young anarchist, and there is no wonder that when he gets away from home he becomes a criminal. But if the boy obeys his parents and his teachers, then it comes natural to obey his employer, when he becomes old enough to enter upon his life work for himself. Having the

habit of obedience, it is natural for him to obey the law, and to give proper observance to the laws not only of his country, but of his own body and soul.

It is through obedience in the home that we come naturally to obey God. For the whole of the world is one of God's homes, and we are all His children. Wicked men and women are bad children grown tall, who have not learned the lesson of obedience.

God says that nothing takes the place of obedience. He told the Hebrews, whose story we have in the Old Testament Scriptures, that it would not make any difference how many sacrifices of lambs or oxen they might burn on the altar before Him, if they continued to disobey Him in their hearts. And that is perfectly natural, for what good wise father and mother would be pleased to have a son who did ever so brilliant work in school, but yet disobeyed them, and refused to keep the rules and regulations of the home? God says, "Obedience is better than sacrifice," and that is a law which is true everywhere, throughout all our lives.

The first thing a soldier has to learn is, not only to obey, but to obey at once without asking any questions. And military punishments are very severe, and come very swiftly, because an army would not be worth anything with which to fight an enemy unless it could be depended upon to obey the commands of its officers the moment they were given. We are all of us asked to become the soldiers of Jesus Christ. Every boy ought to be a cadet in the army of Christ. If we do that we must obey Him in everything. We

may be sure that He will never give us any orders that will not be for our good. Sometimes an officer in the army may blunder and may send the soldiers into danger when it is not necessary ; but Jesus, who is our Captain, will never do that. We may give Him prompt obedience, and follow wherever He leads, with the assurance that so long as we obey Him faithfully, no real harm can come to us, and He will bring us off "more than conquerors." The first command for enlistment is, "Son, give me thine heart." Have you given your heart to Christ? Are you obeying Him and asking His help, that you may follow Him better day by day? If not, why not enlist now?

INVENTION.

I DON'T mean that all the boys should study to be inventors in the sense of trying to rival Franklin, or Morse, or Edison, in discovering ways of controlling and using electricity, or in building new machinery. Some inherit the talent for invention; and others have little gift in that way, while they have other talents for music or oratory or a hundred other things that are just as useful in doing their work among men. What I really mean is that every boy ought to be taught to use his head in seeking to discover methods of doing whatever he has to do in the very best possible way.

I have seen two barbers, each shaving a man side by side in a barber shop. One of them had invented, by thinking about it, and drilling himself in it, a graceful, artistic way of taking the beard off a man's face. His touch was as delicate as a woman's, and a man felt as though he had been caressed after he had been shaved and had his toilet made by this artist at his business. The other man only meant to get his work done as quickly as possible and with as little trouble to himself. His hands rested heavily and slovenly on his patron; his razor was used as though it was a meat-axe, and he acted as if he had so many hairs to cut off for so many cents, and the

manner made no difference. He put soapsuds in the eyes, ears, mouth and nostrils of the disgusted being in his chair, who vowed, inwardly, that if he escaped alive he would never be found in such hands again.

Now, that is a fair illustration of the difference in work done by an inventive man and one who is not inventive. One does his work anyway, to get rid of it; the other gives thought and attention to become skilful and graceful and artistic in his way of doing what he has to do, no matter how commonplace the work.

You can hire some cooks very cheap, and feel that you are cheated. But there are men who have invented methods of broiling beefsteak or concocting a gravy or a soup, so that they earn thereby many thousands of dollars a year, and are in great demand. The same truth applies everywhere. Value is given to the deed, and a romantic flavor is given to it, by applying thought and attention to it.

Somebody has said that the best fertilizer any man can mix with the soil of his farm is some of his own brains. And that has proved true. In Great Britain, in these latter years, notwithstanding its use for so long a time, through the fertilizers that have been invented and the new methods of farming that have been studied out, they can produce about three times as much grain or hay as they could a hundred years ago from the same soil. The reason is, they used to farm with their hands altogether, and now they use their heads, too.

This applies to every department of life. If you

are going to be a merchant, or a lawyer, or a doctor, or a teacher, or a preacher, or a machinist, or an electrician, or anything else, and hope to amount to anything in your business, you want above everything else to cultivate invention. Study out the best way to do things.

John Wesley once started a Sunday-school in Savannah, Georgia, and a good many of the boys and girls came to school barefooted because they were too poor to have shoes. But there were some rich families whose children wore shoes and stockings, and they said uncomfortable things about the ones whose feet were bare. And so Mr. Wesley set himself to invent a method of stopping all the talk, and yet not do any harm to his Sunday-school. He finally hit on a plan, and the next Sunday, imagine the surprise of teachers and scholars to see their preacher walk into their midst softly, with bare, clean, white feet. One can fancy that those who wore shoes drew their feet back under the benches, and the barefooted ones, conscious of being in good company, sat very straight and looked satisfied and happy. When it came Mr. Wesley's time to talk to the school, he spoke of the fearfully and wonderfully-made human body ; and, placing his foot on a chair, gave a list of the bones, tendons and joints, and many other interesting facts about the foot. He told the school that no human being could possibly make a piece of machinery as marvellous as the foot. He remarked, further, that all the clothing we had to wear, while often necessary, was a hindrance to our

usefulness. He called attention to the clumsiness and ugliness of shoes and stockings as compared to the natural foot, with its white and pink coloring, the blue veins showing through, and each toe protected by a beautiful, transparent shell that we call a nail. Even the tan on the feet of children spoke of the goodness and kindness of the Creator. This tan was made by the great sun and the soft, odorous winds. And so Mr. Wesley's invention silenced all the gossip, scattered the hard feelings to the winds, and gave the school a very interesting address.

Boys, begin now to use your heads on everything you do ; and whatever you have to do, don't seek simply to get rid of it, but to invent a way of doing it gracefully and as perfectly as it can be done.

DRILL.

TO learn to do a thing well requires that we shall do it over and over again a great many times. Did any of you larger boys ever watch a baby boy learning his way to his mouth? It is great sport to watch him. He will throw his hand up in the air over his head, bring it down in front of his face, to somewhere near the right spot, then "whack" he takes himself. Sometimes he makes a bull's-eye and hits straight into his mouth, but just as likely as not it is his nose or his chin or his cheek that he strikes. But as time goes on, having business with his mouth frequently, he makes the journey over and over again until he finds the near cut and can carry his hand straight to his mouth, without any accident on the way.

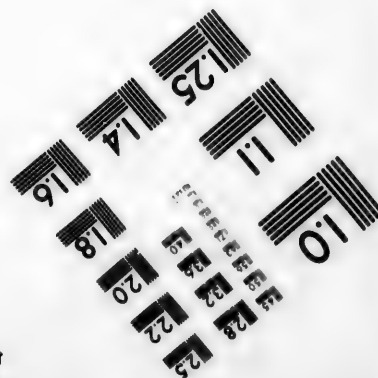
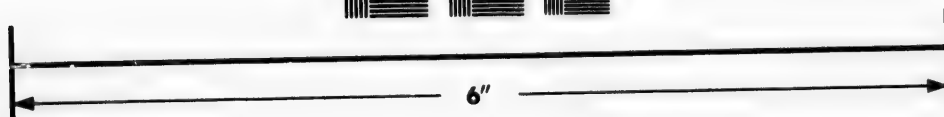
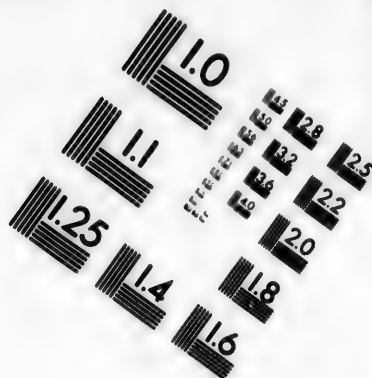
The same thing occurs in learning to walk. A little fellow just being taught how to stand up on his feet has a very serious problem on hand. At first he has to climb up by the side of a chair, and hold on to it in order to make his legs go, one after the other, and after a while, when he gets so he can stand alone, there is a time when he is like a little steamboat I have heard of. It had steam enough to go or to whistle, but it had not steam enough to go and whistle both at the same time. Whenever it whistled

it stopped. So this young boy can stand up, or go, but he cannot stand up and go at the same time. But the instinct to travel is in him, and he keeps drilling away until his legs get to be such good soldiers that they go marching off whenever he orders them.

Learning to talk is very much the same sort of an experience. What a jumble the untrained tongue and lips do make at forming the simplest kind of words! But if the drill keeps up, it isn't long until the tongue goes over its beat with the rapidity and the certainty of an old veteran.

This is illustrated in all the things we do in life. To do a thing well you must drill yourself at it. Emerson says that a very commonplace person will deliver a recitation better after repeating it over thirty times than a genius could do at first. So it is that drill takes the place of genius and even oftentimes surpasses it. We are all bundles of habits, and drill gets its great value because it has for its background this power of habit.

If you have been accustomed to sleep until seven o'clock in the morning, and to-night you put beside your bed an alarm clock set to ring at five o'clock, the probabilities are that you will jump clear up in bed to-morrow morning when it goes off. If you get up promptly in response, and go out to do the day's duty, it will not take more than three or four or half a dozen such awakenings for you to get drilled into the habit of waking at five o'clock in the morning as certainly without the alarm clock as with it. But if, on coming



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to consciousness, you seize the clock and thrust it under the mattress on your bed, and lie down and sleep again, it will only be a few mornings before that alarm clock could ring its loudest and longest, and, if you are a reasonably sound sleeper, not disturb you at all. You will have drilled yourself into the habit of paying no attention to it.

The same law holds good when it comes to truthfulness and honesty. If you hold yourself to the right every time, and always face every question squarely, telling the truth and living the truth under all circumstances, doing honestly everything that comes to your hand, you are soon drilled into it, so that you work with all the precision of a clock in a faithful way. Such a boy has no temptation to be dishonest or to be untruthful, for he is drilled in genuine character.

The same is true concerning self-control. Solomon says that a man who rules his own spirit is greater than the man who captures a city. Any boy may become such a ruler. All it requires is a daily drill in self-mastery. Some boys fly all to pieces when things go wrong, and they envy other boys who control their temper, and excuse themselves by saying, "Oh, I am so quick-tempered!" But if the quick-tempered boy will put himself under drill, and, when he is tempted to say the wicked word, or to do the rash, wrong deed, through anger, will hold himself silent and force himself to be patient, it will not be very long before he will get control over himself. He drills himself into self-mastery. Habits of

courtesy and politeness are acquired in the same way. Habits of kindness and unselfishness of conduct toward others are also great drill-grounds for boys.

The first thing they do with a young soldier is to put him to drill until he can carry himself and step like a soldier. I have a friend who will stand with me in the street and pick out every man who has been a soldier by the way he walks as he goes by. It is the effect of the drill still left on him, though it may be years since he was in the army. So the first thing Christ does with those who are to be His soldiers is to drill them in prayer, and Bible-reading, and honesty, and truthfulness, and kindness one to another. Are you a soldier of Christ? Then be faithful on the drill-ground.

PARASITES.

A PARASITE is something that will not work for a living, but sponges off somebody else. When I was a boy over on the Pacific Coast I used to see great quantities of mistletoe growing in the branches of the oak trees. The mistletoe is a parasite. It grows out on the branches of the oaks and sucks the juices which the oak pumps up through the limbs to feed its own leaves and acorns, and does not give back anything in return.

When the hotel-keepers had their convention in Cleveland, Ohio, the other day, they devoted a good deal of attention to the question as to how they were going to protect themselves from a class of people who come and take a room at the hotel and eat at the hotel table as long as they dare, and then slink away without paying their board bill to try their luck awhile somewhere else. The oak tree is the mistletoe's landlord, and the mistletoe never pays his board bill. There are parasites among other things than plants and trees. You have all seen the little bits of crabs that sometimes you find in the oyster soup. These little crabs live in the oyster shells and steal their house-rent in that way. On the plains the owls and the rattlesnakes sponge their house-rent off the prairie dogs and live in their holes.

There are some birds that are even meaner than that, such as the cuckoo and cow-birds. These birds are too lazy to make a nest for themselves, but they watch around, and when they find another and more industrious bird off the nest, they slip in and lay their eggs in the other's nest, and then go off and leave the neighbor birds to hatch out their eggs and bring up their young.

All the parasites are not among plants or shellfish, or owls, or other birds. I have often seen them among boys and men—people who want to sponge everything they can from other folks, and get along in just as lazy a way as is possible and live at all. I don't know anything that a boy ought to be warned against more earnestly than the danger of becoming a parasite. Many boys get spoiled while they are yet quite young, by depending on their father or mother, or their older brothers or sisters to do services for them which they ought to do for themselves. No boy ought ever to have somebody else doing for him what he can well do himself. Manhood depends largely on independence and self-reliance, and the only way to develop those qualities is to do everything for ourselves that we can.

The scientific men tell us that all these parasites in nature suffer on account of their laziness. If it is an insect, and it does not use its wings because it has a chance to get along without flying and live on somebody else, it soon loses its wings altogether. Some worms which find that they can get their food by letting it soak into them, instead of taking the

trouble to eat it, lose their stomach and other organs of digestion. But none of these lose so much as a boy who was made to live a bright, active life, to do work strong and noble, but who gets into the habit of loafing and sponging from other folks.

A boy parasite often ends in being a tramp or a town pauper. He sponges from his mother and father as long as he can ; then he sponges from his employer until no one will hire him ; then he sucks all he can get out of the friends of the family and kind-hearted, charitable people, and finally he gets to the end and turns up a pauper.

Two young fellows often sat side by side in the same school, and grew up with equal opportunities for success in life. Thirty years have passed, and one of them has a beautiful home, wife and children, a good business, is honored and respected by everybody ; while the other, ragged and dirty, comes sneaking in at his old classmate's back door to beg a breakfast, after he has slept on the floor of a police station, or in somebody's shed or coal-house. The difference between these two has been brought about because one was a faithful, honest worker, and the other was a loafer, who sought to get along by living on somebody else's work.

Don't be a parasite !

WHO OWNS THE HEAVENS?

WHEN Professor Barnard had decided to leave Vanderbilt University for the greater opportunities offered him at the Lick Observatory, a friend of the University at Nashville spoke regretfully about it to the late Bishop McTyeire. The witty bishop responded: "The heavens seem to belong to this Barnard."

The heavens belong to anybody ready to take them by force with such earnestness of soul and fidelity of spirit as Professor Barnard has evidenced.

Professor Barnard, like many of the most heroic and victorious characters now before the eye of the world, was born in deepest poverty, and had to fight his own way from the start. If we were to strike from the list of those who have achieved great things all who came up from the very lowest level of human struggle, we should blot out some of the brightest stars from the human sky. Henry M. Stanley was so poor and unknown that he did not know even his own father and mother, and was dependent upon charity through all his early years, and yet, if we were to drop him out of the list, it would change the map of the world. Thomas Edison, as is well known, struggled from the ranks of the newsboys, and afterwards from the crowd of journeymen telegraphers, up to the most

conspicuous position as an inventor in the brightest age of human history.

These facts ought to give great encouragement to boys and girls who are without money or powerful friends to give them aid. Such aid very often hinders more than it helps in the development of a strong, conquering character.

Edward Emerson Barnard, one of the most successful of astronomers now living, is still a very young man as age is counted to-day, for he was not born until 1857. His family were so poor that his widowed mother could manage to send him to school only two months, and though he has become a splendidly educated man in some lines, it has been achieved by watching the odd moments and using the leisure time which so many young people throw away in idleness, or in pursuits that are worse than idleness.

When only eight years of age, when many boys are in the kindergarten, young Barnard was compelled by poverty to go to work in a photographic studio in Nashville, where he remained for a number of years. From his first memory he had always been interested in the stars, and took great delight as a little boy in watching the heavens at night, and in noticing the change in the appearance of the face of the sky as the seasons changed. This interest received a great impulse which settled his future career in a very curious way. He had been working with the photographer for some time, and had very carefully saved what he could from his small wages until he had laid by what seemed to less prudent boys a very considerable sum of money. This was known to some of

the other boys in the town, and they regarded him as quite a capitalist. One day one of his young friends, who was a good deal of a spendthrift, came to him in boyish trouble and begged for a loan of some money, offering to leave a book with him as security. Although young Barnard was very doubtful about ever getting his money back, he had a tender side toward his young friend, and could not refuse him.

"Here is your money," he said; "keep your book and pay me back when you can."

The boy who received the loan was so happy at getting the money that he ran away in haste, leaving the book behind him. The young photographer examined the book curiously, and found it to be a work on astronomy by Professor Dick, who was then the most famous popular writer on that subject. Perhaps there was not another book in the world that could have so fascinated young Barnard, with his native love for the stars, as did this one. He did not go to bed that night at all, but sat up poring over its wonderful pages. He had never read anything which gave him so much happiness. From that day on he greedily devoured everything he could find on the subject of astronomy.

He bought a small spy-glass, and spent a good part of every clear night on the roof of his mother's house studying the stars. At length he secured, second-hand, the tube of a large spy-glass, into which he fitted an eye-piece, and sent to Philadelphia for an object-glass. In this way he searched the heavens night after night, and revelled in what to him were the most marvelous views. The excitement and

joy which came to him in those visions, secured by his own unaided efforts, have, no doubt, never been equaled, even when he has been occupied in making brilliant discoveries with the largest and most powerful telescope in the world.

One day a traveling showman appeared in Nashville with a small glass which he used as a street exhibition. Young Barnard was a constant supporter of this show whenever the nickels were forthcoming. This, of course, was a small affair to be called a telescope, but it was better than his home-made observatory.

Finally, by practising the most rigid economy, he was able to purchase a very respectable telescope, with a suitable equipment of eye-pieces and other accessories. With the aid of this larger glass he was able to discover two comets before they were seen by any of the professional astronomers, who had far more splendid instruments than his own, and whose trained eyes were ever alert for such celestial visitors. This made the young photographer famous throughout the world, and from that day on the best telescopes on the globe have been open to his eye.

The splendid career of such a man ought to inspire every youth with noble ambitions. The way to achieve greatness is to be useful in the place where we are, and to be constantly fitting ourselves to fill the larger place when it comes to us. Remember that the heavens belong to the man who has the eye to see them and the soul to appreciate them.

POLITENESS.

THE word "politeness" has two meanings. One suggests a person who is elegant in style, and whose language is polished and manners smooth, without any reference to what he may be thinking or feeling inside the head or the heart. There is another meaning to the word which describes the real politeness. According to that definition a polite person is one who shows by his manner and conversation the kind regard for the comfort and happiness of others which he feels in his heart. That is genuine politeness. It is well to be polished, both inside and out, but I am compelled to say that if we can have but one, it would be better to have the inner polish. It is not necessary to say that, however, for in these days in our country it is possible for every boy to not only have kindness of heart, but to have grace of manners which will enable him to express his kindness in a gentle and gracious way.

Many boys are impolite because they do not have a spirit of deference and respect toward others. If a boy thinks too much of himself he will have a poor opinion of the worth and importance of other people, and it will be natural to be rude to them; but if a boy always remembers that there is something in everyone he meets to which it is perfectly proper for him

to lift his hat with a spirit of deference, it will be easy to be polite. Of course he must be polite to a very old man or woman, to show the respect which youth properly pays to age. Politeness is essential and proper to one who is crippled or weak, in order to show the due compassion of strength.

The first Napoleon was not a model in every way, and was not always polite ; but the story is told that once, when he was Emperor, he met some workmen who were very heavily burdened. Some ladies immediately in front of the Emperor were indifferent to this fact, and made the burdened men give up the path for them, though it was very hard for them with their heavy loads to do so. But Napoleon stepped to one side and exclaimed : " Respect the burden ! "

That was an example of politeness which it is well for us always to follow. True politeness always seeks to find a way to make it easier for those with whom we are associated ; to make people feel at home with us. If they make a blunder, we will not rudely add to their pain by making much of it, or finding our own amusement in it ; but by drawing their minds away, try to relieve them of embarrassment.

There is a very pretty little touch of politeness of the right sort in that book which all the boys were reading a few years ago, called " Little Lord Fauntleroy." That noble little fellow was trying to explain something to his mother one day, and though he did the best he could, he could not make her understand it. Finally she said, " I must be very dull," but the polite little fellow, full of love for his mother, could

not bear to have her called dull, even by herself, and so he generously and politely replied : " No, dearest ; it's not that you're dull, but I'm not a good 'splainer."

Perhaps that story has the real secret of all politeness in it. The boy thought the difficulty was in himself and not in his mother, because he loved her better than he did himself. So the Scriptures say that we must not be thinking most of our own affairs and making much of our own wisdom or ability, but we must think on the things of others, and must estimate them at their highest value.

Jesus was the one perfect gentleman who has ever lived, and He was most thoroughly polite. He was always thinking how to make others happy. Sometimes people were brought to Him who were in trouble, and who were so ashamed and disgraced that they did not dare even to look in His face ; but Christ was so gentle and kind with them that He soon made them feel at home with Him, and inspired them to take heart for a better life. Once, just after His arrival in the town, a nobleman who lived in a palace met Jesus, and wished Him to go with him to see if He could save the life of his little girl. While He was passing through the street toward the palace, a great crowd of curious people gathered about them, and among them was a poor woman who had been sick twelve years and had spent all she had in doctors' bills, and grew worse all the time. She pressed along with this crowd and managed finally to get close enough to touch Christ's robe, for she thought that if she could just do that, it might

cure her. And it did. And Jesus stopped and turned around, and held a conversation with her in the midst of the crowd, and told her that she never should be sick with her disease any more. If she had been the wife of a nobleman, she could not have been treated more politely or graciously by the Saviour.

I think it will help every boy to feel that in being truly polite he is following the example of Christ, and is becoming like Him who is and ever will be the ideal Christian gentleman.

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POLISH.

A LITTLE polish will make things look very different in this world. A little polish on a stove will make it look a great many years younger and vastly more neat and respectable. A little polish on a boy's shoes will change them from ugliness to something really attractive. A pair of very old shoes will seem to renew their youth under the brush of an expert "shiner," with a little good polish in hand. True, the shoes are the same kind of shoes they were before, and maybe will not last any longer than they would without it; but they are a great deal nicer to have around while they do last.

The polish counts for a great deal in dealing with the most valuable and important of things. This is especially true of diamonds and other precious stones. I suppose that some boys, who haven't thought about it much, imagine that when a diamond is found in the mine it is the same marvellously brilliant thing that we see flashing in the ring or breastpin of some elegantly dressed lady. But that is a mistake. It takes lots of polishing to make a great diamond blaze with light. When they are first found these precious stones are covered with a dark, rusty coating, every bit of which has to be taken off before they are ready to receive and give back the brilliant light of the sun.

In dealing with large diamonds, this polishing process is often very tedious and expensive. The famous Koh-i-noor diamond, after it came into the possession of the Queen of England, was subjected to repolishing with the help of a steam engine for twenty-three days, twelve hours each day, and it had already been polished a great deal to make it ready for its place in the turban of Mohammed Shah, from whom it came to Queen Victoria.

The Regent diamond which was placed by the first Napoleon in the hilt of the sword of state, in France, was also subjected to a polishing process for two years at a cost of twenty-three thousand two hundred and fifty dollars. This is done to bring out their beauty, so that their brilliancy can be fairly seen and appreciated.

Sometimes we say about a boy that he is a diamond in the rough. What we mean by that is, that there is a good deal of ability in him, and some good qualities of mind and heart, but that he is rude and uncouth, and does not always conduct himself with good manners.

I think boys, more than girls, need to be cautioned about the lack of polish. Many boys make the great blunder of getting an entirely erroneous idea of what is manly. Sometimes a boy smokes a cigarette because he imagines it will make him look "manly," when in reality it makes him look anything else but manly. Again you will see a boy using blustering, ugly words, and sometimes vulgar or profane words, because he imagines that it is manly. All that is a

wrong idea of manliness. Of course, courage and strength and honesty are manly qualities. But they are all the more manly, and certainly the more attractive in their manliness, when they are gracefully presented to us by a kind and courteous manner.

Jesus Christ was the one perfect man who has ever lived. And though He was perfectly frank and truthful, yet His whole conduct shows a marvelous amount of polish. He dealt with all sorts of people, in palaces, at weddings, at funerals, at great feasts, in fishing parties, in mass meetings, in the synagogue, in the streets, where they brought their sick and people who were possessed with devils for Him to heal. Sometimes He was very popular, and sometimes very unpopular, and yet through it all there was a polish of gentleness, of consideration for others' feelings, of desire to do good and to give happiness, that causes Him to stand to-day, after all these hundreds of years of growth in art, and literature, and invention, and science, as the most perfectly polished gentleman that ever lived.

That is the kind of polish I would like you boys to have. I would not want you to be fops, or dudes, or milksops of any kind. But I would like you to have the sterling qualities, such as courage, and hardihood, and honesty, and truthfulness, twined about with modesty, and kindness, and gentleness that will make all these great, rugged characteristics of your manliness stand out as something beautiful and splendid. Don't be afraid, boys, to put on the polish of true beauty of character. It will not hide your strength; it will only make it shine.

WHERE THE RIVER IS BORN.

IT is a very interesting thing to stand on the summit of a range of mountains and watch the canyons running down from the mountain-side on either hand, and all opening out into some one large canyon that widens and widens into a valley far away in the distance, with a river shining in the sun like a silver ribbon through the center of it.

I once stood in a little marshy depression on the summit of the Blue Mountains, in eastern Oregon, between two springs that were not more than fifty yards apart. I walked from one to the other, and getting down on my knees in the grass, drank out of each ; and yet they were the beginning of streams that if two men had followed up, starting from where they could talk with each other from the springs, they would after a while have been a thousand miles apart. A very little water ran out from either spring ; but that little flowed on one side to the east and on the other to the west. As it trickled over the rocks, another spring and another added their waters. Pretty soon, from the right and the left, a little wooded canyon brought in another gurgling rivulet, until ere long the little stream caught a song in its heart, and gathering other singing streams as it proceeded, it

was big enough to turn the mill-wheel, and then, as it neared the valley, it had to be bridged. After a little men called it a river, and bridged it no longer, but threw a cable across to which they tied their ferry.

I stood there on the mountain and looked first one way and then the other, down the long, dark, wooded canyons, until far away on either hand I traced the winding way of the river from each of the little springs that gushed forth at my feet. So close together they were now—so far apart after a while.

All human life is like that. The larger life of the man or the woman is but the swollen river that has received the waters of the boyish or girlish life of a few years before. The course the stream takes in youth determines what it shall be later on, when the rugged hills of boyhood and girlhood are left behind.

I stood once in a church in Boston when Oliver Wendell Holmes was introduced to read a poem. He was very popular with the people and everybody seemed to love him. He read his poem with the most perfect grace and kindliness, and was an ideal picture of beneficent old age. A young fellow standing by my side in the crowded aisle whispered to another young fellow who was with him, so loudly that I overheard, "I would like to grow to be an old man like that." I longed to get a chance to tell the boy that if he wanted to be an old man such as Dr. Holmes was then, he had no time to lose; for to grow to be a good old man, one needs to begin in boyhood. It is on the hill-tops of youth that the current of life gets its trend. Dr. Holmes himself

sings of the "Two Streams," that tell of life's early choice of an ideal :

" Behold the rocky wall
That down its sloping sides
Pours the swift rain-drops, blending, as they fall,
In rushing river-tides !

" Yon stream, whose sources run,
Turned by a pebble's edge,
Is Athabasca, rolling toward the sun
Through the cleft mountain-ledge ;

" The slender rill had strayed,
But for the slanting stone,
To evening's ocean, with the tangled braid
Of foam-flecked Oregon.

" So from the heights of Will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends—

" From the same cradle's side,
From the same mother's knee—
One to long darkness and the frozen tide ;
One to the Peaceful Sea ! "

THE FORTRESS OF THE HEART.

THE heart and not the head is the central throne of human life. Many a clear head has gone to its ruin through the power of a bad heart; and many a weak head has worn the crown of glory through the benediction of a good heart. It is desirable to have a good head and a good heart, but the heart is of the more importance. The Bible sets this forth in many striking sentences. Solomon says: "My son, give me thine heart," intimating that if that was given, all was given; and again it is declared, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he;" and yet again, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Jesus declares that "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

Anselm says that our heart is like a mill which a certain man gave in charge to his servant, commanding that he should grind in it only his master's grain—whether wheat, barley or oats—and telling him that he must make his living on the produce of the mill. But that servant had an enemy who was always alert to do him harm. If at any time he found the mill unwatched he threw in gravel to keep the stones from

acting, or pitch to clog them, or dirt and chaff to mix with the meal. If the servant was faithful in watching the mill, there came forth the beautiful flour which was at once a service to his master, and food for himself; but if he played truant, and allowed his enemy to tamper with his machinery, his employer was angry, and he himself was starved. Our hearts are like that mill. They are ever grinding on the thoughts and imaginations with which we feed them. The devil is a vigilant enemy; he throws in evil thoughts which can only be prevented by watchfulness and prayer.

The heart is more important, also, because it will live forever. The world shall pass away, and all its glories shall fade as a leaf, but the heart lives. In a great sculptor's studio in Rome are four marble busts, which represent the seasons. Spring is a delicate girl, with rosebuds on her breast, flowers in her smooth, silky hair, and a wistful, hopeful look of the future. Summer is a woman with full lips, face and figure, flushed with health and vigorous life, heads of wheat in her hair, and a satisfied look of the present. Autumn is the same face later, crowned with clustered grapes, wearing a look of pensive retrospect, as though she were looking backward a little, and scarcely liked to go on. Winter, with rigid, shrunken face, and blown hair, wears pine cones on her thin locks, and her failing eyes seem to face a driving storm.

These marbles speak not only of earth's seasons, but also of the rapid procession of the periods of our human life. All life's promises end thus in decay

except when the heart is kept ever sweet and young by fellowship with Jesus, and buoyed by the hope of eternal life. Eternal youth sits on the faithful heart. No wonder Christ asks for our hearts; for nobody cares for a thing unless it comes from the heart. We often say of a compliment, or a gift, that we value it highly because it came from the heart.

A pretty story is told of Uhland, the German lyric poet. Uhland was as modest as he was learned, and when the King of Prussia offered him a most coveted Order, he declined to accept it. While the poet was explaining to his wife the reason which moved him to refuse the distinction, there was a knock at the door. A peasant girl of the neighborhood entered, and, presenting Uhland with a bunch of violets, said: "This is an offering from my mother."

"Your mother, child?" replied the poet; "I thought she died last autumn."

"That is true, Herr Uhland," said the girl, "and I begged you at the time to make a little verse for her grave, and you kindly sent me a beautiful poem. These are the first violets which have bloomed on mother's grave. I have plucked them, and I like to think she sends them to you with her greetings."

The poet's eyes moistened as he took the flowers, and, putting them in his buttonhole, he said to his wife: "There, dear woman, is not that an Order more valuable than any king can give?"

So Jesus knocks at the door of our hearts, and if we let Him come in, He will abide there, a sacred guest; and there will be peace and love and beauty about the fireside where Christ dwells.

LEMUEL BARNHART'S CHRISTMAS.

IT was Christmas Eve in a slum tenement house in an Eastern city. Little Lem Barnhart was sick. For several days he had had a high fever, and his mother was anxious about him. The Barnharts had not always lived in the slums. Mr. Barnhart had been a traveling man, and had had good wages, and the family had always been comfortably cared for until this year. The firm that Mr. Barnhart worked for went out of business, and he had gone to the city, hoping to better himself, but for months had been out of work, and things had gone from bad to worse with the family. It takes a good deal to feed a family of seven, and there were five bright children in the Barnhart family. They had become acquainted with the pawn shop in the last six months, and little by little their silverware, their books, and their better clothing had gone into the bank of the unfortunate.

They were now at the very bottom of the ladder. It had been weeks since they had had enough to eat. The jobs of work which Mr. Barnhart was able to get barely kept them in bread and a little tea. They were reduced to only two rooms in a miserable slum tenement. One of these they rented daytimes to a man who worked nights, for that little bit of rent

money might mean the difference between starving and living.

Lemuel Barnhart was twelve years old. He was a beautiful boy. He had a fine head clothed with dark glossy curls, large, melting eyes, and a profile that would have made any artist wild with admiration. But the poor fellow was very sick, and his mother could not keep back the tears as she bent over the dry-goods box which served as his bed. "If I could only get proper medicine and food for him," she thought, "it would not be so hard to bear."

As she laid her thin hand on his hot brow he opened his eyes with a smile, and said, "Mother, I had such a beautiful dream. I thought I saw the superintendent of the Sunday-school and the preacher up at the church where I went those two Sundays, and where they were so nice to me. And I thought the preacher smiled at me and said, 'Don't you worry, little boy; we'll bring everything around all right.' Wasn't that funny, mother?"

Just then there was a knock at the door, and the mother, opening it, saw two strange gentlemen. One of them inquired, "Does Lemuel Barnhart live here?"

"Yes," she replied; "but he is very ill."

"I am the pastor of the church where Lemuel came to Sunday-school for a little while," said one of the gentlemen. "And this is the Sunday-school superintendent," indicating his companion. "We were very much interested in your son, and we came to see why he had not been back to Sunday-school."

The pastor and Sunday-school superintendent

were greatly shocked as they saw the evident poverty, and drew out, by degrees, the story of misfortune that had brought the family to such distress. Proper medicine and the care of a good physician, with temporary help in the way of a big Christmas basket and a load of coal, were the immediate result of this Christmas-eve visit. Work was found for Mr. Barnhart the next week, and the family saw happier days with the beginning of the new year. Lemuel was sick for several weeks, and for a long time hovered between life and death, but good care brought him round, and he came slowly back to life. About the time he recovered a better position was secured for Mr. Barnhart in a suburban town, and the family removed there.

Seven years passed away, and the pastor who had had the opportunity of bringing help in the very nick of time to the little sick Sunday-school scholar and his distressed family, was lecturing one night, the week after Christmas, in an interior town, several hundred miles from that slum tenement house. At the close of the lecture, while shaking hands with a number of people who gathered around him, he was astonished to find a man and a woman holding on to each hand and crying over him with joy. He did not remember either of them at first, but, looking beyond them, he saw looming up above them the never-to-be-forgotten face and eyes of Lemuel Barnhart. It flashed over him that this tall, slender six-footer was his little boy of the dry-goods box, and these must be his father and mother. He learned that, as better

times came to the family, they had returned to their old home, and were now comfortably located. Lemuel, now nineteen years of age, was the assistant secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association in the town, was the teacher of a large Bible class in the church of which he was a member, and was fitting himself for the ministry. The pastor went to bed that night in the sleeping-car with a light heart, and vowed that that one happy result of a kind deed more than repaid him for all the attempts to help the unfortunate that had seemed to fail.

A DRIFTWOOD CAMP-FIRE.

IT was down on Lake Erie, on the beach, on a beautiful night in July. During the afternoon we had been lying under the great trees pretending to read our books, but really using the books to cover long looks off across the lake, watching the shifting smoke from a steamer, or the white sails of a freight schooner, as they came into sight every now and then, and were lost again in the distance. It was a beautiful afternoon, one of the kind when the air is so pure and sweet, and the woods about you so fresh and alive, that it is good simply to be able to live and breathe. As the sun went down in the lake like a great wheel of fire, we aroused ourselves from our reveries and began to build a camp-fire for the evening. It was a point on the lake where large quantities of driftwood are swept in to the beach, and as there had been many hot days, this cast-up wood was dry and made splendid fuel for our fire.

I will tell you, boys, how to make a good camp-fire for cooking. In the first place you must have two good logs and roll them up to within four inches of each other ; then get your kindling and smaller sticks and build your fire between them. In that way you get a good draft for your fire, a hot fire, and yet you

are able to get close to it on either side, as the big logs protect you from the heat. Don't forget this advice next time you go camping.

We had brought with us some young chickens about half grown, and these were dressed and halved as for broiling. We cut several alder sticks about the size a boy would get for a fish-pole, and then left on the top end four or five prongs, ten or twelve inches long. These prongs we sharpened at the end, run two of them through the half of a chicken and stuck pieces of fat bacon on the others so that the bacon hung over the chicken. Then when the fire got hot we held chicken, bacon and all over the red coals. How the bacon did sizzle and sputter, and the drops of rich fat run down over the chicken! Ah, but wasn't that delicious eating!

But chicken wasn't all we had. We had a big arm-load of roasting ears. We carefully husked the corn, and then taking a stick like one of the others but with only one sharp point to it, stuck it into the base of the ear of corn until it was held securely, and then roasted the corn over the coals until it was brown on the outside and cooked through to the cob. After we had had our fill of chicken and corn, we made a delicious dessert by toasting marshmallows in the same way. The keen evening air, the music of the waters washing against the pebbly beach, all add zest and gladness to an occasion of that sort.

After the supper was over we gathered a larger quantity of driftwood and built a much greater fire, one that must have made a great red pillar against

the sky, showing for many miles out across the lake. And then for hours we lay under the trees and chatted and told stories, watching the camp-fire, and ever and anon turning our eyes upward to the splendid star-lit sky overhead. The milky way, which seemed like some great highway across the sky, strewn with star dust, never appeared more splendid and beautiful than it did that night.

When at last the camp-fire had died down on the beach, and we wended our way across the fields to the farm-house, we all felt that it had been an occasion long to be remembered. That which had given us the great happiness came largely from two things: the rarity of the occurrence, and the joy we had in each other's fellowship. If we had been accustomed to taking our supper that way every night, it would no doubt have seemed tiresome and monotonous to us; and if we had not cared for one another's society it would have been a dull, dreary evening. So it is that the great blessings of life come from very simple sources, that are common and open to all. The happy heart, the cheerful spirit, will find in the most unpretentious circumstances a chance for gladness and peace.

A TAXIDERMIST'S HUNT.

WHEN living in Boise City, Idaho, a number of years ago, I made a collection of the birds of southern Idaho, with their nests and eggs, which was sent by the Territorial commissioners to represent the Territory (it had not then been admitted as a State) in the New Orleans Exposition. I had never had any training in taxidermy until I began that work, and there was a good deal of difficulty in getting started.

I sent east and got all the books I could find on the subject, and then began experimenting. There was a young doctor in town who had done a little amateur work, but he had forgotten most of it. I remember that the first bird we stuffed was a red-winged blackbird, and that after we had worked on it faithfully an entire evening our friends told us that we ought to label it or people would think it was a camel.

But if one has a little natural gift and a great amount of pluck and stick-to-it-iveness, he can accomplish anything, and it wasn't long until I could stuff a big sand-hill crane so perfectly that the children would quarrel as to which was the live one and which the stuffed one.

The most interesting incidents of making this collection were the study of the habits of the birds and the securing of the eggs and nests. I had a great many charming and delightful expeditions that summer hunting for the nests. I remember one on Government Island, across Boise River from the city. A branch of the Little Boise River swung off there a few miles, and made an island of a beautiful small forest of timber with many open glades, and it was a most delightful place for the birds of every sort to make their nests. A young photographer, who was often with me on these expeditions, accompanied me on this occasion.

I was exceedingly anxious to find

A KINGFISHER'S NEST.

A kingfisher is an easy enough bird to find along a stream of water where there is fish, but his nest is very hard to find. We knew a bend in the river where we had always noticed kingfishers, and felt sure there must be a nest along the bank somewhere. We set ourselves to watch where we had a good sweep of the bank on both sides. A big kingfisher sat up on a limb over the river, with one eye on the water below it. Suddenly it swooped down into the water and brought up a fish four or five inches long, and instead of going back to the limb, made for the high bank on the other side of the stream, and went into a hole in the bank not much bigger than my fist.

She had given away her secret, for she had gone to

her nest. How to get at the nest did not seem so easy a matter, as it was up higher than either of us could reach, even by standing in the water under it. We had on rubber boots, and so waded around under the nest, and I finally climbed up on the shoulders of my friend, who was a short, heavy-set fellow, and in that way was able to reach the hole in the bank. We thought we would catch the old bird on her nest, but she came out terribly excited while I was clambering up. I ran my arm in, however, and about eighteen inches back in the clay wall found the eggs and secured them.

The next nest I hunted out was

A YELLOW-HAMMER'S.

A golden yellow-hammer is one of the handsomest birds one ever sees. When the sun shines on his plumage in the woods it is perfectly gorgeous. I found his nest in a little cottonwood stump about four feet high. About six inches from the top of the stump there was a little round hole in one side of it, from which I saw an old yellow-hammer come out. The top of the stump seemed sound, but the shrewd bird had discovered that it was soft inside, and he had cut a hole about three inches in diameter, and after working in had carefully cut out the wood with his sharp bill, and had thrown it out, until he had dug down nearly two feet into the stump, and had the most delightful home imaginable.

This island was a great place for

THE MAGPIES.

Their nests were everywhere. There must have been hundreds of them in those woods. The magpie is the sauciest and most interesting bird in the Idaho forests. He mimics everything else, and his saucy talk to a hunter seems almost human. His deep glossy black, almost green, plumage, with the snow-white markings, makes him a very handsome bird. I already had his nest and eggs, but the young magpies were in some cases getting large enough to fly, and I secured several specimens of these to take home and keep in a large willow cage, in order to study their habits and get better acquainted with them. Once during the day we had occasion to cross a narrow, but rather deep, stream, a branch of the river that cut across the island. It was too deep to wade, and the only way to cross was on a fallen tree. My friend, the photographer, would always get dizzy if he looked down on running water, and did not dare to try to cross the log alone; so I carried the guns over, and then went back and took him on my shoulders and carried him across. I have often thought of that day when I have found somebody in difficulty who needed a broad shoulder and a helping hand to keep him from falling into the current and being swept away. The best of having a steady head is, that you may keep from falling like one who is dizzy.

JOHN HUNTOON'S SKATE FOR LIFE.

IT occurred during the days of my boyhood in Oregon. It was an unusually cold winter for that section, and two young fellows, one of whom was John Huntoon, went back into the Cascade Mountains, along the Santiam River, hunting for deer. They only went for a few days, and took their entire outfits on their backs. The boys took their skates along and skated for a good many miles up the river, wherever they found smooth ice.

After several days of good hunting, in which they had killed several big bucks, they started for home, with the hams and hides done up into bundles so that they could drag them in most places on the ice behind them. All went well until they were within a few miles of the settlement, when the other young man, whose name I do not remember now, decided to hang up his part of the game in the boughs of a big tree, except what he could carry on his back, and make his way across country to another settlement, where he wished to visit some relatives. After the division had been made, young Huntoon bade farewell to his friend, and without any thought of danger started on down the river, pulling his own game on

the ice behind him. He had not been separated from his friend, however, more than half an hour when he heard a wolf howl. He thought nothing of that at first, but pretty soon he heard another, and then another. The first howl had seemed a long way off, but every one seemed nearer, and John began to get nervous.

John hurried on, but had not gone a quarter of a mile before he saw a wolf skulk along the edge of the river. After that they seemed to come up out of the snow and the woods everywhere, and he saw that they were getting closer all the time. By this time John's heart was in his throat, but he was a plucky backwoods lad, and was determined to fight for every inch of advantage. He knew that a hungry wolf would as soon eat wolf-meat as anything else, and so when they began to get so close as to be troublesome, he put the bullet in his rifle through one of the wolves. In a moment there was a great pile of growling, fighting wolves, the noise of which almost made John's blood curdle in his veins. While they tore the wolf to pieces and devoured it, he hurried on as fast as he could, still pulling his load of venison behind him. He had lost all hope of getting home with it, but he still hoped through it to get home with his life. He threw his gun away now, for there was no use in trying to get time to load it, and made the best pace he could down the river. In a few moments on came the wolves, bolder than ever from their taste of blood. Suddenly John stopped, and the

wolves shrunk back for a moment. He unloosened from the pack the hams of a big buck, with the deer hide still on it, and flung it on the ice behind him, and then hurried on again. In a moment the ever-increasing pack of wolves were fighting over that haunch of venison. John saw that his only hope of escape now was in rapid flight. He calculated that the other two carcasses that he had been pulling behind him on skids, would detain the wolves long enough for him to get a pretty good start, and possibly start enough to help him escape to the settlement. He adjusted his skates as quick as he could, threw off his outer coat, and sped away like an arrow down the river. Some of the wolves started to pursue, but all stopped when they came up to the skids with the other venison. Huntoon was running for his life, and put a long distance between himself and his enemies before he came to a piece of rough ice, which greatly delayed him, so that by the time he got started again on the other side he heard the wolves howling in his rear. On they went, the wolves gaining now every minute. He did not dare to look back, but he began to feel that his strength was giving out, and unless help came he would meet a horrible death. Just then he heard a shot, and then another and another. They came from the timber on the river bank just behind him, and as he swung around the men who had shot from the woods called to him, and he made his way to them as rapidly as he could. The wolves were now devouring their three

dead companions, and with the three guns the men had no fear, especially as their cabin was not more than two hundred yards away.

Have any of you boys any wolves on your track—any hungry wolves of habit that howl in your ears and threaten to eat up your character and destroy you? If you have, I know of One who will come to your help if you ask Him—it is Jesus Christ our Saviour.

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A BOY'S RELIGION.

Why?

I THINK boys sometimes get it into their heads that religion is something only for men and women and girls. I suppose most boys who have been raised in Christian homes never think but that after a while, when they are grown-up men and have a home of their own, they are going to be Christian men. No boy when thinking of what kind of a man he is going to be when he is middle-aged, ever picks out some drunkard or gambler or irreverent, profane person and says to himself, "After a while, when I get to be forty or fifty years old, I hope I shall be a man like that." On the other hand, a boy is more likely to select some man who is full of goodness and kindness, who stands in the community for everything that is strong and noble, and whom people trust and admire for his honesty and his pure life. Every boy who thinks about it hopes some day to be that kind of a man.

Now, what I want especially to say is, that such men never come by accident. They grow, and they grow out of boys. If a boy wants to be a strong, noble man after a while, the time to find the proper method of living is now.

What all boys need to learn is, that being a Christian is not something strange and unnatural. It is not something from the outside which you can acquire as you can go down to the ready-made clothing store and buy a coat. To be a Christian is to be such a boy as Jesus Christ was. Not that you can go and live in Palestine, and all of you work in a carpenter shop as He did ; but that you can have the same sort of spirit that He had. We know some things about His boyhood. Among other things, that He was kind, and obedient, and loving to His father and mother ; that He was reverent and liked to go to church, and talk with those who were wise about God and heavenly things. He was a good, wholesome, honest boy, who loved God and who did right toward the people with whom He lived.

Now, I think boys to-day need to live that kind of lives as much as at any time in the history of the world. I want to give you several reasons why you should be a Christian boy.

First. Because it is the best life anybody ever lived. Jesus lived the perfect model life, and to strive to be like Him is to try to be the very best boy you can be.

Second. It is the happiest life that has ever been lived by any one. Notwithstanding all the unkind treatment which Jesus met with while here on earth, He lived the most perfectly contented and happy life that any one ever lived. He never had "the blues," He was never discouraged, He was never cross ; He was always cheerful and kindly and patient. He

never did one man or woman or child any harm, and He did everybody good. Even when He came near to the end of His life, and saw clearly that He was soon to die on the cross, He saw on ahead, beyond the cross, how much good His death was to do, how much joy and happiness it was to bring to the world, and that filled His soul with great joy.

And the people who have come to love Christ are the happiest people in the world. They are the best-looking people, they have the most wholesome faces, because they have the consciousness that they are pleasing God. So if you boys want to live happy lives, I know that you should be Christians.

Third. Because the Christian life is the strongest and most helpful life that any one can live. It is a terrible thing to live in the world a good many years, and finally die out of it, and nobody be the happier or better because we have been here. Those who live selfish lives, thinking only of their own pleasure, cannot please God, and in the end do not please themselves. Jesus Christ was always helping somebody, and the boy who becomes a Christian and seeks to please God every day, will always be helping people. His life will be strong and splendid with that noble strength that comes from goodness and helpfulness.

How many are God's blessings to you? Did you ever try to count up all the blessings of God to you? David did once, and he said that they were more than could be numbered. Now, the good God who has given us all these blessings and mercies which we enjoy—home, food, clothing, friends, our own health

and strength, our powers to enjoy by eye and ear and in so many other ways—has given the Lord Jesus to be our Saviour, and we cannot perfectly please Him in any way except by loving Christ and trying to please Him with all our hearts. Jesus said once to some of His friends, "He that loveth me keepeth my words." We are to show our love for Christ by doing what He said.

Now, one of the few definite things which Christ asks of those who would be His friends, is that they should confess Him openly before other people. He says if any will confess Him before men here on earth, in the great day of judgment He will confess them before all the angels of heaven. Give your heart to Christ now and let Him guide you and lead you, and your life will grow happier, stronger and more beautiful through all the years to come.

A BOY'S RELIGION.

When ?

WHEN should a boy become a Christian? That is certainly a very important question for the boy, and to everybody else that knows him ; yes, and to a great many who do not know him, for it will have a great deal to do with the kind of man he is going to be.

My answer is, that he should become a Christian at once. If being a Christian was some unnatural and mysterious thing that required a great deal of wisdom and profound study, then, of course, a boy might have to wait until he was grown-up and educated before he began to be a Christian. But it is not that way. It is very simple. Jesus once took a little child on His knee, and said to the people who were listening to Him, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

What did Jesus mean by that? He surely did not mean that all those grown-up men and women could change into a little child and get into the kingdom of heaven that way. What He must have meant was that they must give up being proud, and hard-hearted, and selfish, and doubtful about God; and ask God for

the things needed with the same loving trust that a little boy comes to his father and mother.

The Bible is full of illustrations of the home as representing our relation to God. God is our Father. He loved us so much when we were sinners that He permitted—yes, He gave—the Lord Jesus Christ to come down from heaven and show us how to live. Hence, to become a Christian is just to turn to our heavenly Father and ask that all our sins may be forgiven, and that hereafter we may live the kind of life which Jesus taught us by His own conduct when He was here on earth.

Nothing could be more unwise than for a boy to put off becoming an out-and-out Christian until he grows up to be a young man. Why doesn't a boy wait to learn how to write until he gets grown up? You say at once that would never do, for his fingers would get stiff, and it would be much harder to teach him to write when he is grown than now when he is a little boy. I know a little fellow who is being fitted for a musician. He has been drumming on the piano ever since he could sit alone, and he could pick out the chords while he was scarcely more than a baby. Though he is only a small boy now, he can play a great many tunes, and he is learning to play the violin. The great teachers say that it is very important to gain control over the fingers and the muscles of the arm while young. How much more needful to begin early when you are to develop the music of the soul into a strong and noble manhood!

If you give your heart to Christ while you are a

boy, and grow up in Christian ways of living, it becomes your very nature, and you escape a great many temptations and dangers that boys find who do not become Christians young. If you learn to love the prayers and songs and services of the church while you are a boy, they will become more and more precious to you as you grow into manhood, and you will have a strength of Christian character that will not be possible if you put off becoming a Christian till you are grown.

A Christian boy has a great many opportunities for doing good that even the best Christian man cannot have. Remember, you are only going to go this way once, and it should be your greatest desire to be the very best and noblest boy God can help you to become. The seasons of our lives are like the seasons of the year; each has its own beauties and its own advantages. Spring-time has one kind of glory, summer another, autumn something still different, and winter a quiet beauty all its own. So boyhood has its own special opportunities and privileges, and since there can be no boyhood so fine and beautiful as a Christian boyhood, that rejoices in love to God and in kindness and brotherly sympathy with its fellows, no boy should fail to become a Christian in the glad spring-time days of youth.

A boy should become a Christian while he is a boy, because most boys get their ideals and their prophecies of what they are going to be while they are still in that dreamy land of boyhood. To give your heart to Christ now is to have His friendship to

inspire you and arouse in you noble Christian ideals for the manhood which may be yours after a while. Many a boy who has had no hope of amounting to anything of value to the world has been awakened to new ideas when he became a Christian, and found in that the beginning of a life far better than he ever dreamed of knowing, and which has proved to be of great service to the world. My advice to every boy that reads this is: "Become a Christian now!"

A BOY'S RELIGION.

Where?

THERE can be only one answer to the above question, and that is—everywhere. A boy who is religious only on Sundays, or when he is in the presence of certain people, is a sham and a humbug. True religion means true life everywhere. It means genuineness. It is health for the inner self. A boy is healthy in his body when he is not sick anywhere. When nerve and muscle, heart and stomach, indeed, the whole body, do what they were made to do, and the boy runs and plays and rejoices simply to be alive, without knowing indeed that he has a heart, or a stomach, or nerves—that is a healthy boy. Genuine religion is moral and spiritual health. It is pleasing God, loving Him, thanking Him for the blessings of life, and gladly doing what we understand He wants us to do.

And I repeat it, a boy's religion should be everywhere he is. We should be as genuine in our purpose as the Lord is. Did you ever notice how God is just as careful about what He does in secret as He is about the doing of those things that are to be witnessed by multitudes of people? If you go away back in the mountains into some deep, dark canyon,

where no human foot has stepped for, it may be, a hundred years, you will see that God has taken just as much care in making the ferns and the flowers and the mosses beautiful in their shape and coloring as He has in the great gardens where thousands of people are to look at them.

The celebrated traveler, Mungo Park, was once in the heart of Africa in great distress. He had lost his property, and had every reason to suppose he would lose his life. He had been taken by a band of robbers to a lonely place in the woods, and left without food or way of escape. He was greatly depressed, and for a time he thought there was nothing left for him to do but to lie down and die. While these thoughts were passing through his mind his eye noted a very beautiful variety of moss, a little delicate patch of color that could have been covered over and hidden by his foot, but it was so delicate in its form and so beautiful in its coloring that it irresistibly caught his eye. He took it in his fingers and examined its roots, leaves and blossoms with admiration. Then the thought came to his mind, "Can that Being who planted, watered and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after His own image?" As he thought about it, he came to the conclusion that the God who did His work so lovingly as to care for that little moss in the wilderness of Africa, would not slight him; and so he overcame his fatigue and went on to a successful termination of his journey.

This God who is so genuine, loves honesty and truthfulness and genuineness in us. It is just as important for us to be religious in secret as in public. And there is this other truth, that the boy who is not genuine in his religion everywhere will not be religious anywhere very long. The humbug is soon found out. A boy may cover up his lack of honesty for a while, but it will soon rub off, this varnish of pretension, and the real ugliness will show to all the world.

The only beautiful and strong life for us to lead is one that is open and genuine toward God and man. If we do right and seek to please God every day and everywhere, whether people know it or not God will know it, and He will bring about our reward in His own way. Jesus said that those who worship God in secret will be rewarded openly. And it is very plain how that will be. If a boy restrains his temper, holds himself back from wicked words, is generous and self-denying at home and in private places, when some temptation comes in public those habits that he has formed in secret will stand by him, and he will be rewarded openly by being able to resist temptation in an emergency, and the strong, genuine character he has been building up will stand solid as a rock. Genuine religion in boyhood grows into strong and splendid character in manhood.

In all his letters published in the New Testament, Paul does not praise any one so much as Timothy. But he opens a window into the reason for Timothy's peculiar goodness and strength when he reminds

Timothy in one of his letters how he had been a faithful, religious boy in his youth. If you want to make a fine-looking tree, you must begin with it early. If you want a splendid horse that will never disappoint you, you must begin to handle it when it is a colt. So, if you want a strong man who will be faithful in all the emergencies of life, let him begin by honest, genuine religion in his boyhood.

A BOY'S RELIGION.

How ?

TO become truly and sincerely a Christian is to love God so much that in all we do we shall wish to please Him.

There is a very interesting and beautiful story in the Old Testament about a boy named Samuel, and how he came to be consciously religious. He had been living with the priest, an old man, in the temple, for quite a while, but the Lord had never talked to him in a way which he understood, and his religious life had not really begun until one night, while he lay on his little bed alone, he heard somebody say, "Samuel." He thought it was the priest, and went to find out what he wanted. But the old man said he had not called him, and sent him back again to bed. It was not long before he heard the same voice calling his name. He jumped up and ran again to see his aged friend, and was sure he had been called this time ; but the priest had not called him, and he was now convinced that it was the Lord who was speaking to the boy. So he told Samuel to go and lie down again, and if his name was called, to answer, "Speak, Lord ; for thy servant heareth." Samuel did so, and when the voice called him again, he

answered as the old priest had told him. And the Lord then gave him a message for the priest. And that was the beginning of a very long religious life.

Now, I do not think the Lord will speak to you in the same way that He did to Samuel, but He will speak to you just as truly if you will listen to Him. God speaks to us to-day through His word in the Bible. He speaks to us by the still, small voice. And when we pray to Him, and ask Him to guide us, and put ourselves into His keeping trustfully, He proves that He is near to us. Christ will take whatever of good purposes and desires you have, if you are honestly trying to please Him, and will multiply them and cause them to cover all your life with their beauty.

You remember the story of how once when Jesus went out into a wild place with His disciples, in order to have a little vacation, a great multitude of people who were anxious to see Him and hear Him followed Him away from the towns to that wilderness camp. There was no chance to get food for such a large crowd of people, numbering many thousands, where they were, and Christ's friends who were camping with Him told Him He ought to send them away to their homes; but Jesus saw there were many who were worn out and tired, and He determined to feed them before sending them away. He had His friends make inquiries about food, and He found that all there was belonged to a little boy who had five loaves and two fishes. But Jesus took the boy's lunch and blessed it, and it so multiplied under that

blessing that all the thousands of people had plenty to eat, and they gathered up many basketfuls of fragments afterwards.

Now, Christ is able to do that in a much higher and grander way with any of you lads who will give your heart to Him. He will take your good resolutions, your honest desire to please your mother and obey your father and to grow up to be a good man, and He will bless them, and under that blessing your heart will grow strong to do right and you will come to shrink from that which is evil, and to have gladness and joy in doing the things that please Christ.

There are several very simple rules by which any boy may become a Christian. First, Listen. "Hearken unto me." The Lord says that a good many times in the Bible. It is the boy who is careless and does not listen to his mother or teacher, who gives them pain and gets into trouble. So it is the heart that does not listen to God that gets into sin. Second, Ask. Christ says, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Pray to God, ask His forgiveness, ask for direction, and above all, ask for more love to Him. Third, Knock. Christ says, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." You knock through your prayer, and your thinking about what God wants you to do, and then getting up and doing it. A man is knocking at the door of a good life when he is kind to his neighbor, when he is patient, when he controls his temper. And then there is one more rule,—Seek. Christ says, "Seek, and ye shall find." Seek to study out how to please your Saviour. Think about it; don't do things

carelessly. Seeking does not mean carelessly looking once and then going away. It means to hunt till you find. Nothing in all the world will repay you so richly as to be truly and honestly a Christian. Begin this very day to accept Christ as your guide and loving companion.

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